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Management of Change in Higher Education

**A project submitted to Middlesex University in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the Doctor of Professional Studies**

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**National Centre for Work Based Learning Partnerships
Middlesex University**

October 2006

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Abstract

The project concentrates on the issues facing Intercollege in its move towards university status. The purpose here is to establish a methodology that will assist the process of gaining university status whilst addressing the change management issues.

The project provides evidence that indicates successful application of change management techniques through the use of communication and presentation skills, exercising responsibility, leadership and delegation of authority so that plans can be successfully implemented through both transformational and evolutionary change mechanisms.

The main themes that emerged from the research are contextualised in a model. Substance considers the external influences impacting on a complex institution such as a university and what senior managers should do in order to enact change. In context the external environment is significant with regard to how the individual stakeholders perceive higher education and how its services may be utilised by them. Stewardship of the institution is focused on leadership and ensuring that all managers fully engage with staff. To support this action learning activities are employed to determine the underlying concepts that require addressing. The overlap applies in different forms throughout the research to reveal that by employing action research techniques, leaders and change agents instigate action learning sets as a development tool to overcome these aspects.

The research indicates that it is difficult to become a successful change agent without being an effective leader and that those successful leaders are successful change agents. The project concludes that a praxis of leadership development programme is implemented for managers and that action learning be used to support this in order to achieve a successful outcome during the transformation from college to university status. This will allow individuals to focus on the transfer of learning to the live challenges of the change process.

Preface

Award

My target award is Doctorate in Professional Studies “Management of Change in Higher Education”.

Management is the generic term under which this project should be considered, but due to the breadth and depth of this topic I propose to outline a general focus on change management with particular reference to higher educational institutions. I intend to develop through the work-based doctorate a significant outcome for Intercollege in the form of a leadership change management course; a benchmarking exercise with established UK universities, academic papers or a manuscript for a book based on the strategic implications in moving a college to university status. It is also intended to use this programme as an opportunity to continue my own professional development with regard to this specialisation.

Coherence of the Programme

The following discussion considers how the modules I have undertaken together with the compiled Recognition and Accreditation of Learning (RAL) claims that form the underpinning knowledge, understanding and my academic and work experiences, support the Doctorate in Professional Studies programme.

DPS 4520 Review of Previous Learning

This module has allowed me to present my diverse employment experiences in industry and academia in support of the project. It has considered my career from its earliest stages through to the present and portrayed me operating in a number of organisational settings, employed in a variety of roles.

Emphasis has been given to my depth of knowledge when applied to dealing with organisational change management situations, which have resulted in bringing

about success and improvement, together with the accomplishment of my own personal goals.

The claim is made in narrative form and includes the relevant aspects that I have adopted and initiated to meet the changing environmental circumstances in order to achieve continual professional development. I show clearly the successes that I have achieved at different levels throughout my varied career and indicate the skills that were relevant in bringing them about and how they might be applied in relation to undertaking the project.

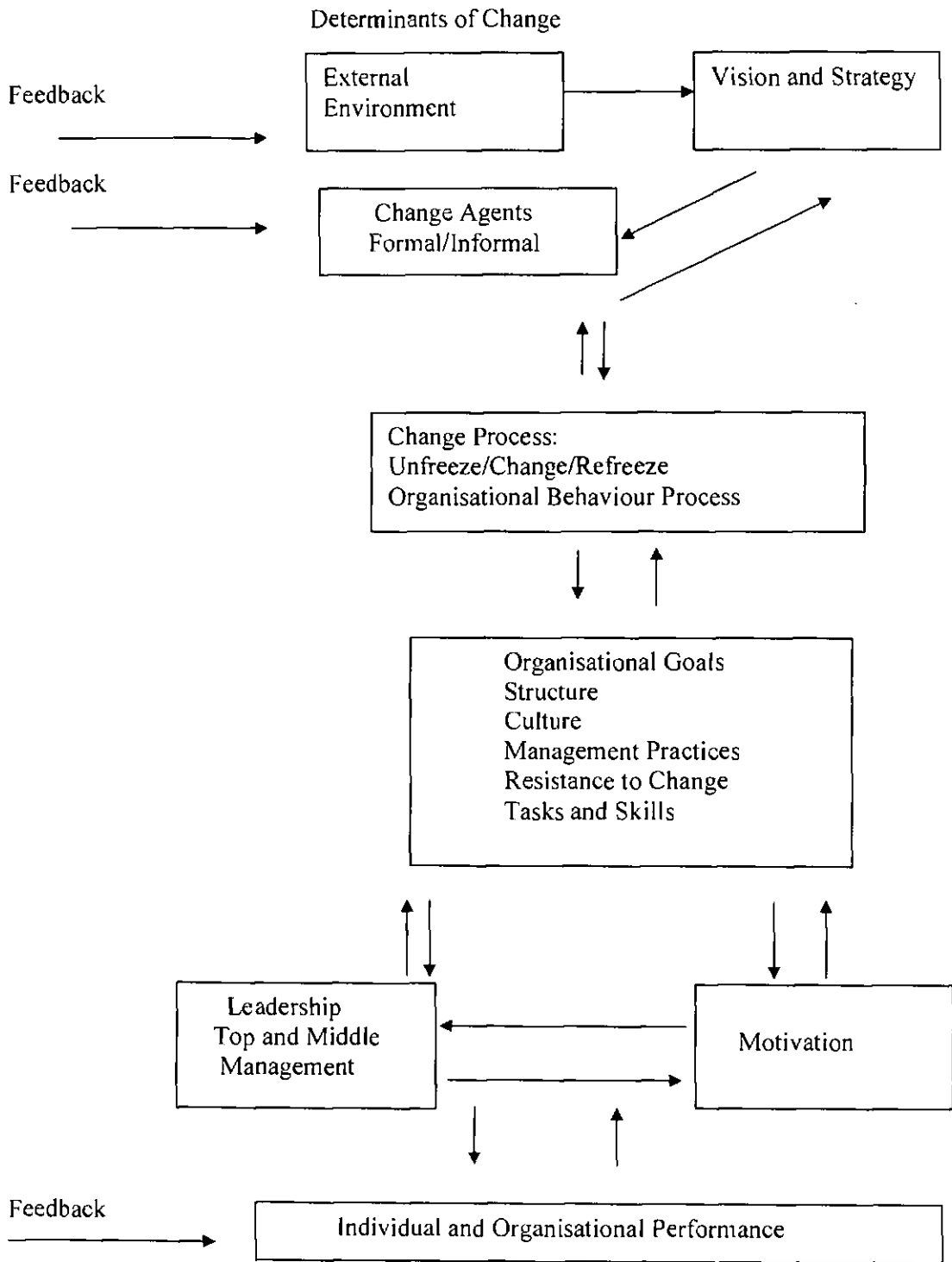
It warrants my expertise to pursue this project and provides evidence to indicate the successful application of change management techniques through the use of communication and presentation skills, exercising responsibility, leadership and delegation of authority so that plans can be effectively implemented through both transformational and evolutionary change mechanisms.

The roles that I have undertaken during my career are significant in number as are the necessary learning experiences thus gained and applied within each role. The various projects fulfilled demonstrate a growing ability to transfer knowledge and understanding to a number of different environments and organisations with a view to improving their performance by generating change in a number of ways. Thereby, the competencies relevant to this project are knowledge, understanding and cognitive and practical skills to implement actions.

Further emphasis of the interaction between the external environment and the organisations I have worked in, reinforces interaction as being the driver of change. Internal analysis of the various organisations and situations have been deliberated and note is made of the internal structures which may also initiate change, and the need to change being stimulated by factors such as that of a visionary new leader. The emphasis illustrates planned change as a response to external factors, but it also considers in-depth whether the necessary impetus for change is generally internal. Thus, the emphasis shows the clear link of change management being accomplished by myself with improved organisational effectiveness being the result of personal actions.

The dual relationship of change agent and external environment materialises as a central incentive to change, and an empirical and experiential model of change emerges which I developed in my MBA dissertation as:

Figure 1: Organisational Change Model



The framework has, therefore, been set to further examine the process, the structural praxis and the consequences of the emerging change at Intercollege.

This module provided the basis for the doctoral research in that key aspects of it will be the adoption of change and how senior managers and academic leaders are likely to react to, embrace and implement the necessary change management procedures in order to ensure growth and sustainability. I intend to examine how change can be embodied not only at the institutional level or as a consequence of institutionalisation, but more particularly at the individual manager level as a continuous 'roller-coaster' process.

Recognition and Accreditation of Learning (RAL) at Level 4 – Professional Learning

Undertaking a Masters in Business Administration programme allowed me to develop the skills and knowledge gained in the workplace, and to complement this by application of the theoretical models and concepts in a work-based environment. At the dissertation level it also enabled me to carry out both a literature review and apply research methodologies, which prior to this I had not pursued. The dissertation considered the implications of change management in the UK former polytechnic sector and how this might be applied to Intercollege. As such, in the application of the research methodology in the final part of the MBA programme, I continued to develop the theme of change management and generated a model of best practice (figure 1, p. 3), that could be applied realistically to an educational institution. I was, then, able to build on my previous experience to ensure that the model had a practical application based on sound methodology and supported by evidence contained in the research literature. This inevitably meant that I had to sustain considerable academic endeavour, which I believe further underpins my ability to complete my doctoral project.

RAL at Level 4 – Research and Development Project Capability

This claim is based on the dissertation topic submitted as part of the MBA programme.

In this dissertation I considered the implications for using change agents in transforming Intercollege in Cyprus from a college of higher education into a private university. The emphasis was on producing a model of best practice (figure 1, p. 3), that may be applied to any educational institution faced with a similar situation, but the intention was to examine the implications for Intercollege and how the college would need to internally change in order to meet the criteria exerted by the external environment.

It was decided that the most effective way to understand these changes would be to research the effects that took place during the metamorphosis of the polytechnic sector into universities in the UK. From an epistemological aspect focus groups were employed in order to apply a qualitative approach that would elicit the underlying patterns concerned with organisational diagnostics. The data that resulted from interviews was collated into several meaningful categories whereby the issues that tended to reoccur frequently were identified and these were then grouped together into several exclusive and emergent themes.

A wide-ranging and comprehensive literature search was undertaken surrounding the issue of change and the consequences that organisations would face if change was to be successfully implemented. The findings from the review were then used both formally and informally with the focus groups within the college using a semi-structured interview technique. A reference panel of vice-chancellors, or their representatives, in the former polytechnic sector in the UK, who had been active as change agents during the transition to university status, was used as a means to confirm or deny the main themes which emerged from the internal analysis. The main themes that emerged were examined together with the ways in which change agents can be employed to address these issues.

From this research a peer referenced paper: 'An institution in change: A private institution in transition' was published in 2003 in The International Journal of Educational Management.

RAL at Level 5 – Advanced Developments in Professional Practice

This claim is based upon the undertaking of a number of activities by me that involved considerable application of my intellectual skills, problem solving techniques and the implementation of a turnaround strategy within a commercial organisation in order to save it from collapse and insolvency. Although the organisation in question faced serious financial and commercial difficulties it did possess an opportunity that would be of benefit to the local community, employees and other organisations locally, nationally and internationally.

I had to consider the structural implications of the business and what changes would be required in order to improve its business performance whilst at the same time reducing its overall expenditure. It was also necessary to see how I could assimilate this organisation within the larger structures of a college and in turn determine how the business could be used to promote a commercial face for the college. At the time this was a unique learning experience for me and presented exciting challenges.

The strategy adopted was built on my previous change management practice experiences but with far more emphasis placed on ensuring that the company was able to be saved and in turn would provide benefit to the main stakeholders. The change process concentrated on the development of a new strategic direction and the development of critical success factors. Overcoming barriers to change within two principal organisations was also a critical factor in the bid to secure a successful outcome. As such, it was vital that I became more ‘politically’ aware and developed a more creative and innovatory approach to change.

The developed strategy is consistent with the model proposed earlier in that I formulated the plans and implemented them in order to build the capability of the company to perform to its highest standards as expected by the external environment. This was not obtained without some conflict and it was necessary for me to devise a change strategy that would inflict as little ‘pain’ as possible but also be realistic to convince employees to ‘buy-in’ to the proposals. Careful implementation within a short timeframe was required and serious negotiations with all stakeholders was undertaken in order to provide a basis for developing a

turnaround strategy. It was during the implementation of these changes and the application of the model of change that I first used an action learning approach. It proved to be successful and supported my research in the MBA, and is likely to feature in the doctoral thesis.

The skills I developed during this phase ranged from creativity and justification through to action planning and engaging in self-appraisal and being able to critically select and judge an outcome to a solution.

I believe that the entrepreneurial activities I managed at the time, provided resources and infrastructures that built capacity beyond those that the college would otherwise enjoy, thereby, allowing it to subsidise and enact an up-market climb in quality and reputation.

The skills and competencies learned at this stage in my career together with the academic insights gained in my professional development have provided me with further evidence to suggest that the change management theme that I am considering for my project is based on a realistic opportunity of success and that the research will be valid and unique in its nature.

Objectives

Building on the evidence supported by the RAL claims it is intended to examine change management issues in the university educational sector with the main project aims:

- To determine a change model that can be applied to Intercollege
Achieved by researching business change models and analysis of change in higher education in the United Kingdom and applying the revealed best practice to Intercollege.
- To determine the issues and the development of leadership as a pivotal role for Interecollege in its transition from College to University status.
The benchmarked integrative model of substance, context and stewardship may then be implemented through action learning sets in order to evaluate the model's effectiveness in an emerging change process.

- Based on the research to recommend a training programme within the model for the effective leadership development of managers
- As part of the training programme, to develop through action learning sets, the leadership skills of the management team as reflective practitioners so as to enable them to deal effectively with emerging change, rather than be faced in the future with transformational change.
- To produce academic papers with specific reference to higher education change management. The first two of the papers that follow have been published as a result of this or previous research and a third is in the process of being peer reviewed:
 1. McRoy, I. & Gibbs, P. (2003). 'An institution in change: A private institution in transition', The International Journal of Educational Management, 17(4), pp. 147-154.
 2. Gibbs, P. & McRoy, I. (2006). 'Dwelling at work: A place where vocation and identity could grow?', Journal of Further and Higher Education, 30(3), pp. 283-293.
 3. McRoy, I. & Gibbs, P. 'Leading change in higher education', The International Journal of Educational Management. Submitted for peer review, October 2006.

The papers are included in appendix III.

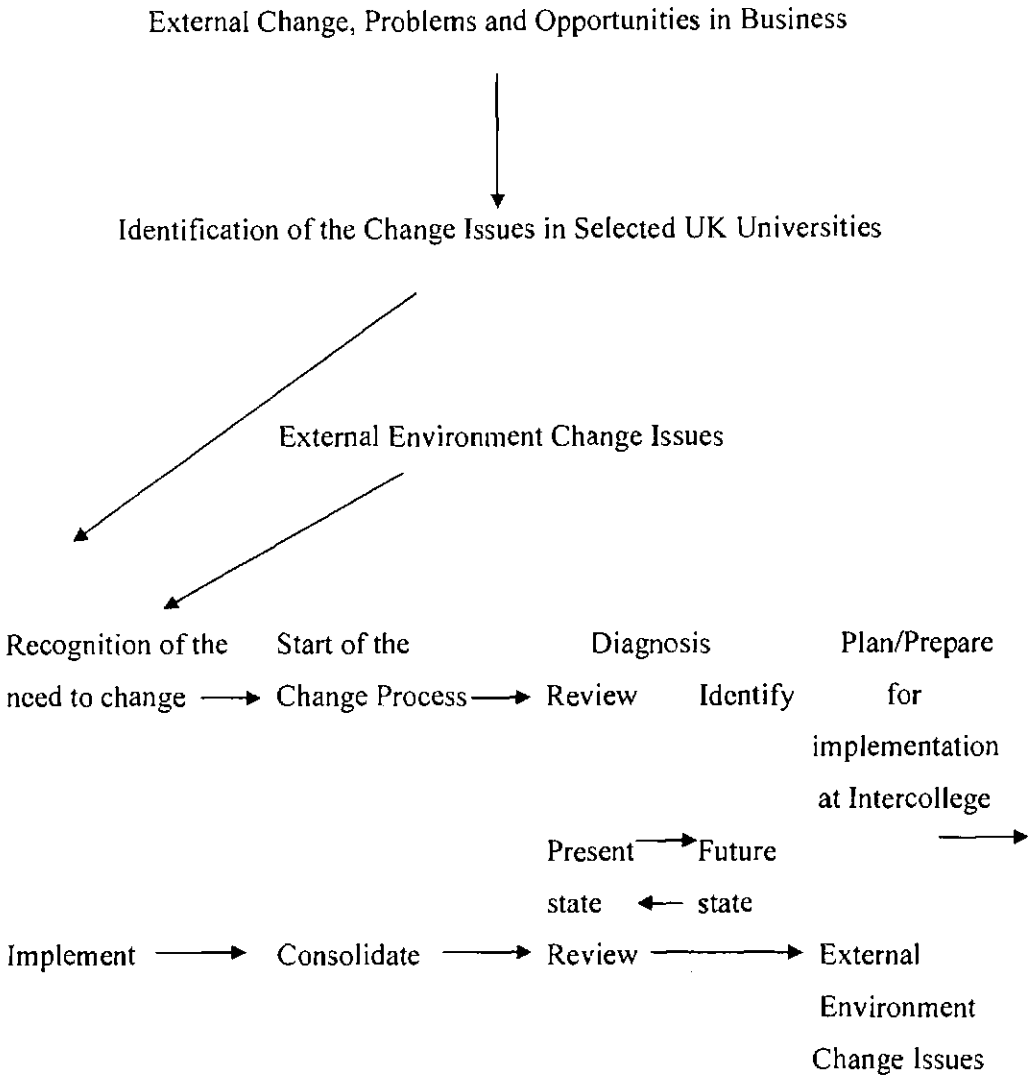
Supplementary outcomes will be:

- The development of the author in the management of change specialisation and to further skills in research methodology.

The key aspects of the research will be the adaptation of change by senior managers and academic leaders in Intercollege and how they will embrace and implement change in order to ensure growth and sustainability. This is supported by the Executive Dean of the College and endorsed by the executive council who are likely to be the managers that will be involved in the action learning sets.

The following model adapted from Hayes & Hyde (1998) outlines the project methodology:

Figure 2



Recommendations

These centre on the complex nature of higher education and the rapid pace of change which places demands on leaders to make informed decisions. During this important stage of transition from college to university status Intercollege will require leaders with the ability to remain focused on the mission, solve problems and exploit opportunities. This will require a change in the traditional charismatic leadership style which is currently employed by Intercollege into a more transformational style. The proposal is that a leadership development programme is initially implemented at management level to involve the deans of school and senior management team in order to empower effective performance as team leaders.

It is recommended that this may best be achieved through application of action learning whereby time is given to focus on what is judged important to the organisation, especially during the transformation from college to university status.

Limitations

It will be assumed that a corporate strategy, a strategic plan, a defined human resource and a quality management system is in place and that aspects of these will serve to underpin the research. Aspects may well emerge from the research, however, that will deem it necessary to consider these processes and systems further through the development of managers for change.

The outcome of the research may be applied to Intercollege together with how internal change agents can be utilised. Consideration will also be given as to how those selected as change agents can be developed through a leadership development programme using an action learning sets approach.

Furthermore this research supports the proposal to consider the key elements that face educational institutions. It portrays change as a continuous process, and the lack of research evidence underpins the research objectives and criteria deliberated in this project. It also links the work to the outcomes that are proposed, in that the implementation of the findings is expected to support Intercollege in its drive to become a university. Also, in comparison with other institutions in the UK it must be able to meet both the internal and external environmental changes that might be required of it.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Environmental Context

Intercollege, founded in 1980, is the largest private tertiary education institution in Cyprus. Within twenty-six years Intercollege has established itself as a dynamic and respected institution of tertiary education. It is the only college on the south side of the island with campuses in the main towns, namely, Nicosia, Limassol and Larnaca. It began as a small institution by offering to a few mainly Cypriot students, academic and professional qualifications by well-known British and American educational institutions in the fields of management and communications. Today it has developed into an international college whereby students of different nationalities can gain graduate, post graduate qualifications and professional degrees.

The demand for higher education has risen considerably over the last twenty years and, according to the Department of Statistics and Research (2002), 60 per cent of all secondary school leavers continue in post-secondary education. The main reasons for this seem to be the significant changes in society, i.e. the change in women's roles, as well as economic, cultural and institutional factors (Menon, 1997).

In the recent past, the government of Cyprus has not played an active role in supporting the developments of private tertiary institutions; in fact it has previously taken a somewhat negative stance. This perspective has, however, modified of late and the government has been revising its strategic direction to develop Cyprus as a 'regional and international service centre', stressing the availability and importance of a well-trained workforce. Despite this change it would seem that there is still a certain reluctance on the part of government to give due consideration to educational institutions, like Intercollege, who are prepared to invest and develop both human and physical resources. The

accreditation process imposed by government – which requires private schools of higher education to undergo external assessment and accreditation (Law, 1/1987) – will continue to affect the desire for the country to become a centre of excellence. The fact that the government signed the EU Bologna Declaration in 1999, albeit late, confirms its intention to ensure that its higher education system reforms meet the demands securing the expansion of private and transnational education, alongside the other constituent parts of the treaty. Within government, however, and in particular the Ministry of Education, there is still a tendency to lean towards a cultural elite (Koyzis, 1997) with its tradition of favouring the Hellenic character of education and maintaining tight regulation and control of the curriculum. As a result, Cypriot higher education is facing a series of dilemmas. Society at large is supportive of a fully integrated system of higher education, both private and public, but there are conflicts between those in power who favour state versus a market driven approach (ibid.). The whole debate of whether higher education should maintain some form of relationship to a cultural past or take an economic stance thus allowing the sector to be flexible to meet labour market needs, is the situation in which Intercollege finds itself as it strives to change to university status.

The government should be eager to reinforce the steady development of universities, and be willing to support those private institutions that have proved themselves through their own assessment process, to have achieved the delivery of successful quality academic programmes as measured against the state university. This supports the argument that change in the higher education sector in Cyprus is necessary.

Subsequently, the law (N.109(I)/2005) passed by the Council of Ministers on 14 July 2005 allowed private institutions of higher education – on meeting the criteria contained in the document – to apply for university status. This date was the last meeting of the Council during that session and the new law was passed as the last act of that parliament.

1.2 Structure of the Project

In the project it is intended to concentrate on the issues facing Intercollege and what it should examine in its move towards this new status. There may be management and transformational change issues deriving from the development and implementation of its strategic plan. As Koyzis (ibid.) indicated, the accession of Cyprus to the European Union would mean that the higher education sector would be forced to appraise these realities, which has resulted in a repositioning of the roles of the public and the private providers.

The higher education system in Cyprus is relatively new with the majority of private colleges being formed during the 1980s amidst raging debate in government as to the development of the sector. The publicly sponsored university opened its doors later in 1992. There is still the argument that higher education should be allowed to develop along the lines of free market pressures, opposed by those in significant positions of authority who consider that higher education should serve and respond to the Greek-Cypriot state (ibid.).

1.3 Format of the Project

Intercollege has moved ahead by transforming its structures and procedures based on evidence gleaned from overseas with an assumption that as a signatory to Bologna the government will need to bring its own criteria into line with the broader implications for higher education in Europe.

In addition there are change issues that are reflected in the political ramifications of becoming a member of the European Union (EU), which are likely to effect changes in the higher education structure. Ultimately, this will manifest itself in the change of programmes from four-year to three-year degrees and necessitate the need for leaders in Intercollege to consider a switch from the American system currently in use.

The purpose here is to establish a methodology that will assist the process of gaining university status and addressing the change management issues. As well as defining the structure and developmental process for Intercollege, irrespective of its title, the college should also ensure that future development and growth is

sustained and that a broader acceptance of it as an organisation will provide a quality of education nationally and internationally.

Prominence has been given to the author's depth of knowledge when applied to conducting organisational change management situations which have led to organisational success and improvement. As outlined in the preface the RAL claims support the author's experience of involvement in a variety of change management initiatives that may be utilised to support this project and highlight the changes that Intercollege will need to face. It is intended that this project will provide evidence that indicates successful application of change management techniques through the use of communication and presentation skills, exercising responsibility, leadership and delegation of authority so that plans can be successfully implemented through both transformational and evolutionary change mechanisms.

An internal analysis of the organisation will be conducted and note is made of the internal structures, which may also initiate change, and the need to change being stimulated. The emphasis is also intended to illustrate planned change as a response to external factors but, it also explores in-depth the fact that the necessary impetus for change is generally internal. Thus, the urgency will be to detail the clear link of change management being guided by improved organisational effectiveness as a result of individual actions.

The key to the outcome of the research may rest in how academics and senior managers adapt to change. The issues raised are likely to be both transformational and functional, with a view to developing a conceptual model, based upon that used in figure 2.1 (p. 25), which might be implemented by the college. The project is intended to be designed so that the main implications for the college can be assessed with regard to sustainability and the prospects for growth through the development of management change issues.

From the evidence revealed in the literature review it may be suggested that higher education is a unique and complex sector in comparison to the business sector, and it should be aware of this distinction as it engages in organisational

change (Winston, 1998). As such, Winston (*ibid.*), goes on to suggest that higher education needs to adopt its own change concepts, methodology and language which are located in its culture and value system. It is suggested that the unique environment of higher education is a known factor and the implications for change demand examination within that context (Kezar, 2001). During change it is necessary to minimise mistakes in either the analysis or the strategy, or by the use of other concepts, i.e. the business process of change, which may fail to engage those people who have to manage the change. In this project it happens to be the senior managers and deans of school in Intercollege who will bear the responsibility of directing the changes from college to university status, albeit that some changes have been initiated already.

There is some support for evolutionary and emerging change – in measured steps – to be contemplated as a continuous process in education (MacDonald, 1997), rather than the transformational model often proffered as ‘the solution’ by management consultants:

“... executives should listen to the siren song of change with a healthy dose of scepticism” (MacDonald, 1997, p. viii).

Nevertheless, in the world of private education, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, some thought should be given to the fact that surplus income requires generating, which in turn, may incur a mixture of continuous change and elements of transformation. The essence is in developing a change model that is distinctive yet fits the culture and environmental context in which the organisation finds itself operating in. The literature review is a conscious decision to view the change in higher education through the lens of business change in order to determine whether there are aspects of the business world that can readily be applied to the university sector.

Morgan (1986), suggests that educational systems may be closed and as such are less likely to mirror the external environment that was previously evaluated. This might reflect the more traditional not-for-profit higher educational institution, but even in this type of organisation external pressures seem to be playing a part in

their evolution to meet the demands that a variety of stakeholders are now placing on these institutions. Studies by Salipante & Golden-Biddle (1995) and Kezar (2001) – in the not-for-profit sector – regard that maintaining a stable set of relationships is important and necessary for survival which in turn supports growth and renewal. They also determined that characteristics such as a long-standing social mission are a feature of not-for-profit higher education.

Kezar (ibid.), identifies several key factors in not-for-profit higher education which influence organisational change and include aspects such as: cultural uniqueness, status, value-driven belief systems, environmental independence, power and authority structures and so forth. In general, the way these characteristics emerge depends to some extent on the culture within the organisation and there is likely to be a certain amount of overlapping of some of the features. Yet, it does appear that the key factors do help to define the nature of the organisation and tend to be deeply embedded within the structure and culture.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review reveals and evaluates topics that may require examination during the change process. This, in turn, has some resonance with the educational change literature. Educational change is then discussed and the key outcome emerging from the overall analysis is leaders acting as change agents, thus providing a focus for the research.

2.1.1 Background to Business Change

When the increasing complexity of the strategic management task, as proffered by Grant, (2002), – a task in which management of change, that is, the renewal and provision of strategic flexibility (Sanchez, 1993; Sanchez & Mahony, 1996; Hitt et al., 1997) – becomes the principal concern, the survival of the organisation and its ability to compete in the future rely upon its capacity for renovation and change (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994; Teece et al., 1997). This capacity is gaining acceptance as the very essence of change strategy (Zan & Zambon, 1993; Francis et al., 2003).

The organisation's intended complexity is based on the quantity and the sophistication of the areas of knowledge and skills of its employees. External complexity arises from the uncertainty and instability of the existing environment in which it exists. An organisation that operates within a highly complex environment in order to meet the demands of change should, therefore, be prepared to adopt both a flexible structure and strategy in order to meet the demands of this complexity (Quinn, 1998; Buchanan & Badham, 1999).

The external environment requires managers that are able to meet the challenges of change management, leadership, motivation and individual and organisational performance skills in order to successfully manage their organisations through the

change process, and Christensen & Overdorf (2000); Miller & Morris (1999) and Tushman et al., (1997) illustrate this need. In addition to this, the attributes that create success in one stage of the lifecycle, or in an historical context, do not automatically ensure success in another, thus making the challenge even more complex (Branchi, 2002). There is an equal need to deal with change in both the public and private sectors, and managers in order to be able to adapt and lead, should become familiar with the literature. In this way managers become aware of the implications of change and are apprised of the dynamics of change in terms of the motivational, behavioural and performance aspects that take place during any change process.

It may be considered that change is a continual process of examining the direction taken by the organisation, its structure, and its ability, or otherwise, to react to turbulence in the external environment and/or within the sector it serves, together with the needs of its employees (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2004; Moran & Avergun, 1997; Senior & Fleming, 2006).

Although change is constant it is important to realise that managers are under pressure in a time of change and this pressure may undermine their own performance. Kotter (1988); Carnall (2003), and Burnes (2004) point out that the organisation may not have managers in post who have the necessary skills to deal with the change process. In essence this may then lead to successful organisations contributing to their own demise unless managers learn to be both successful and adaptable. A successful organisation, built on the skills of a few key people, together with a period of growth and coupled with organisational complexity, which is then followed by a decline in performance due to lack of application of change techniques, may find itself focusing only on micro-environmental factors. This may lead to a lack of credibility in senior managers, combined with a fear of failure throughout the organisation (Buchanan & Badham, 1999; Carnall, 2003). This short-term approach linked with an autocratic management style and a functional organisational structure can give rise to top managers failing to take risks or becoming entrepreneurial in their outlook.

Interventions aimed at securing organisational change depend heavily on effective leadership (Buchanan & Badham, 1999; Carnall, 2003). Leaders model openness, risk taking and the reflection necessary for learning, and communicate a compelling vision, thus providing the essential empathy, support and personal advocacy to lead others towards the desired behaviour.

In his studies on leadership, Kotter (1988, 1995) identifies that leaders require a broad knowledge of the industry sector in which they operate, as well as experience of the business functions of their company. Kotter also identifies the need for leaders to possess a range of contacts in the sector plus good working relationships within the company and the industry. Other managerial skills identified by Kotter are, strong interpersonal skills, high integrity, recognising value in people and a strong desire to lead.

The pace of change in other sectors worldwide during the late 1990s and the early part of the twenty-first century has emphasised the whole process of change. Survival over the last decade, for various organisations, has meant that the change processes have in many ways re-engineered the methods by which they are organised and managed. The conceptual re-engineering model asks managers to rethink their work methods, to question how work is done, and to quantify how outputs are shaped by inputs. A definition of re-engineering by Hammer & Stanton (1995) points to major improvements of performance which culminates in a dramatic breakthrough in achieving targeted outcomes. This means that management should undertake to identify the causes of problems, eradicate them and reinvent better ways of achieving the end product. This new process results in redesigning many employees' roles, and alters the attitudes, beliefs and norms in order to support the new position and evaluate and reassess outcomes.

Hamel & Prahalad (1994) suggest that re-engineering is insufficient and that there is a need to regenerate strategies, and competing in the future means aiming higher than competitors. They further suggest that transforming the organisation is essential but that the real winners actually go on to transform their sector. If this is the case, then change in the organisational context, although important, will not be sufficient to maintain a competitive advantage because competitors will be

able to copy this strategy. To be successful, regardless of which sector, the new strategies will, therefore, need to be concerned with transforming the whole industry.

The re-engineering process has been based on asking management leaders to undertake a paradigm shift in their vision as to how the organisation operates by completely reassessing the nature of education and how it operates within its environment. In many cases this process of change has failed and the method of the change process has been blamed for this failure. Weller & Hartley (1994); English (1994); Davies (1994) and Weller (1996a) cite disillusionment and criticism of the models based on management techniques and total quality management (TQM) as being culpable for the ineffective reform.

For organisations to survive Conley (1993) suggests that they will have to be responsive to the environment and flexible enough to meet ever-changing demands. Constant change will mean that success will be more reliant on the ability to respond quickly and adapt to the relentless changes thrown at it. The social, political and economical changes are further complicated by developments in technology, which require rapid movement and an innovatory response. Therefore, the emerging workforce requires new skills and knowledge in order to meet the demands that will be placed on it. The shift, then, to holistic thinking and multi-disciplinary approaches, as distinct from departmentalised, including team working and unity of purpose will need to be engendered.

According to Hammer & Champy (1993), many businesses that undergo fundamental change implement new processes that cross a number of organisational boundaries. This enables the development of flexible units, which in turn allows for interdependency, interrelatedness and integration, resulting in holistic thinking and planning. Similarly, Applebaum et al., (1998) contend that those organisations that have been successful in the change process tend to focus on customer outcomes and their needs. They invest in supplying a better service and recognise that the needs of customers underpin the organisations' existence. At the same time, their structures are organised so as to meet the needs of their missions. For example, managers at department level have freedom to operate

within specific targeted goals. Generally, the successful organisation will have a simple structure that avoids employing large numbers of surplus staff. Also, entrepreneurship at the lowest level possible is encouraged through creativity and a risk taking approach, which if successful is rewarded (Vecchio & Applebaum, 1995; Quinn, 1998). A management approach that places emphasis on leadership skills and the achievement of goals is apparent, coupled with a commitment to concentrate on its core business activities and meet customer demands.

2.1.2 Organisational Change

Organisational change must generate management practices and skills that are beneficial to achieving the new mission and strategy. In cultural change, involving people in the commitment to change is seen to be fundamental; therefore, managers need to address what new techniques they need to employ to move forward with the change initiatives (Trahant & Burke, 1996).

According to Christensen & Overdorf when:

“the organization’s capabilities reside primarily in its people, changing capabilities to address the new problems is relatively simple. But when the capabilities have come to reside in processes and values, and especially when they have become embedded in culture, change can be extraordinarily difficult” (2000, p. 71).

They continue by suggesting that when new capabilities are required then the organisation may need to seek space where these capabilities can be addressed through either:

- Creating new organisational structures within the current boundaries;
- Spinning out an independent organisation from the existing one; or
- The acquisition of another organisation where the values and processes closely match the requirements of the new task.

Obviously, these alternatives have both structural and leadership demands.

Any change process imposes pressure on an organisation and the managers who have to deliver the outcomes. Two schools of thought have developed models that attempt to help change agents in understanding and implementing change. Organisational development models focus on achieving consensus and

participation between employees. Lewin's (1951) field force analysis helps individual leaders analyse the change, predict the possible consequences and handle resistance throughout the process. The model assumes that there needs to be balance between the sources of change and the resistant forces. Change agents, therefore, need to be aware of and assess the power of these forces and encourage change through maximising the driving forces and minimising the resisting ones, or develop new ones that promote the benefits of the change process (Buchanan & Boddy, 1992). Robbins (1983) indicates that implicit in the unfreezing-changing-refreezing process is the knowledge that simply introducing change does not eliminate the prior conditions that existed before, or that change will be lasting. Therefore, the change agent has to decide what resistances there are likely to be and to either increase the driving forces or decrease the resisting forces in order to achieve lasting effect. Wilson (1992) points to a behaviour modification model that looks towards the wider concepts of motivation, reward, learning and culture. This second model asks change agents to communicate a vision of how they want to achieve a 'best fit' to the environment. They then persuade the individuals to 'buy in' to this desired culture by adopting psychological theories of learning (Felkins et al., 1993).

The assumption of endogenous change made by Lewin's (1951) model, with its depiction of stability before and after a change intervention, is being challenged by examination of the fundamental aspects of change, and the phenomenon of continual organisational change is emerging (Dunphy & Stace, 1990; Dawson, 1994; Buchanan & Badham, 1999). This discontinuous nature of organisational change is reflected in the dynamic models recognised by studies undertaken by Pettigrew (1985), Fombrum (1992) and Greenwood & Hinings (1998). Change cannot be seen to occur at a steady pace, rather there are periods of incremental change in between more turbulent periods of change, which have in the past given the illusion of stability and may have been viewed as a static type model.

A processual approach is argued by Pettigrew (1992) in studying change management and he eschews a static model in favour of one, which pivots on temporal issues of action and sequences of events. As such Tushman et al., (1986), consider that to maintain viability organisations change incrementally in

what is termed convergent change. This convergence is an organisation's desire to achieve the 'best-fit' between strategies, structure, people and systems, which are never in perfect alignment (ibid.). It is, therefore, a continual process aimed at improving strategic alignment.

Leifer (1989), supported by Hayes (2002) and Jick & Peiperl (2003) view change as normal and simply a reaction to external environmental factors and the internal conditions within the organisation. He sees change as being consistent with open systems in which organisational learning takes place and further argues that stability does not exist. Learning refers to change resulting from experience. This view is supported by Mintzberg (1979, 1991); Ulrich & Lake (1991) and Senge (1990, 1993), who reflect that organisations need to adapt a form that allows continuing adjustment and learning to take place. It would then appear that a part of organisational life includes the capacity to change which embraces flexibility in less certain environments (Daft, 1995).

According to Tregoe & Zimmerman (1982) an organisation's enabling competencies which become deeply embedded in each element of a company's value chain, shape core values, define the required resources and establish the organisation's cultural imperatives. This, in a sense creates the organisation's distinctive persona that defines its intentions, priorities, routines and sense-making activities (Orton & Weick, 1990; Weick, 1995, 2000).

From these considerations, there has then to be interest in what happens during the transitional phase of change in an attempt to consider the issues related to the dynamics of change. This acceptance of the dynamic model views change of itself as an emergent process rather than 'big bang' as represented in a sudden and dramatic development (Hayes, 2002; Nelson, 2003; Senior & Fleming, 2006).

The dual relationship of change agent and external environment materialises as a central incentive to change and an empirical and experiential model of change emerges, as considered by McRoy & Gibbs (2003) and illustrated in figure 2.1 (p. 25).

This model further emphasises that change is not static and that constant interaction with the micro and macro-environments in which the organisation operates in is essential, coupled with continuous feedback from performance of both the organisation and individuals, in order to ensure that the change process is revisited and a 'best fit' strategy is maintained.

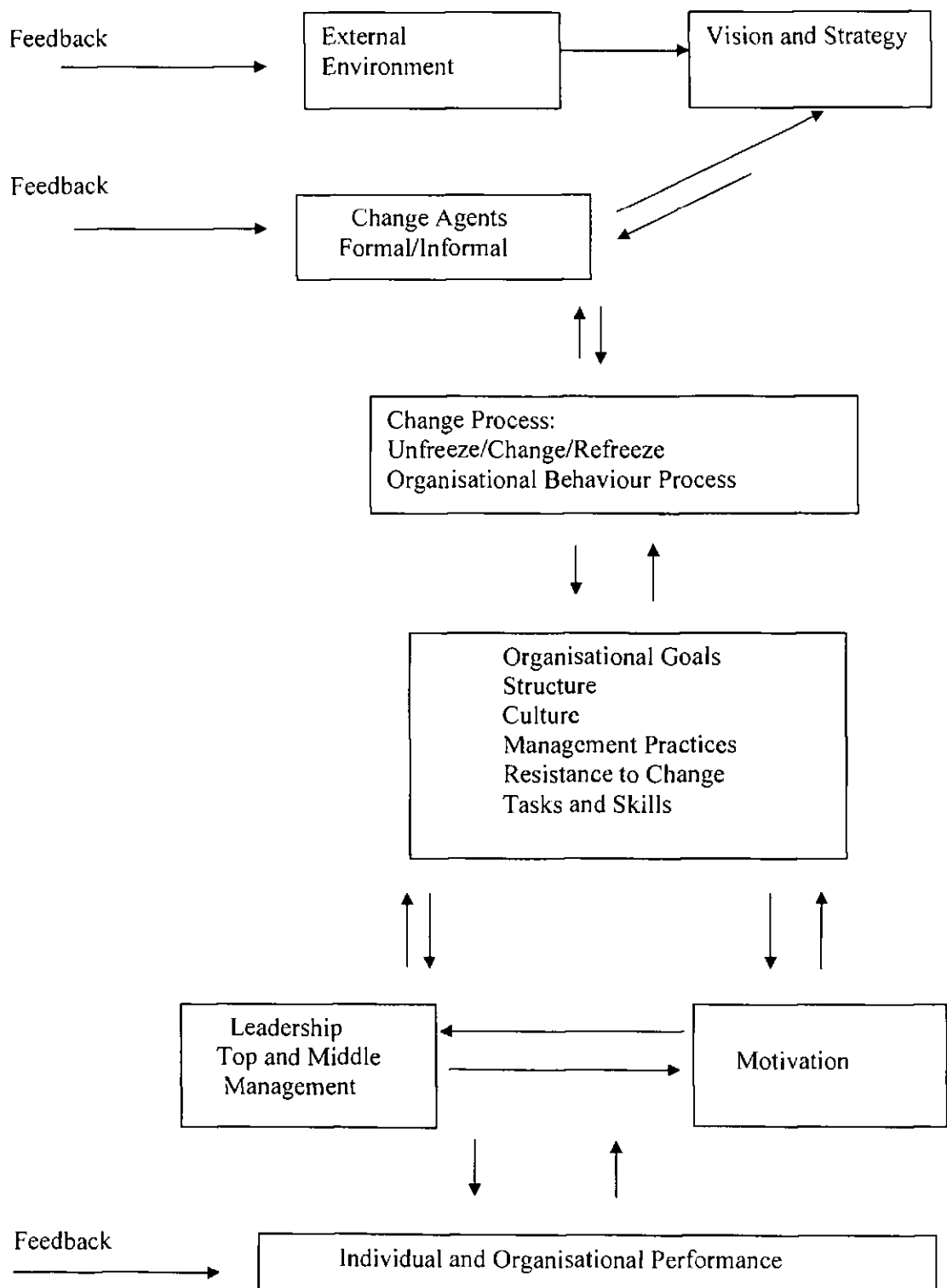
In a company, Stopford & Baden-Fuller (1994), supported by Hayes (2002), consider three stages in creating initiative in adaptive change over time. The first stage is when individual initiative arises. Renewal, gradually spreading throughout the company is the second stage, and the third is when the specific characteristics of the particular initiative gains increasing support and becomes strengthened. Combine these with a proactive approach; the development of existing capabilities; a team approach; conflict resolution techniques and the capacity to learn, and change becomes a potent force in the company.

In a change situation distinctive capabilities are important, however, Teece et al., (1997) indicate that these capabilities must be in a continuous state of rapid, flexible adaptation to support the requirements of each successive new condition. In this way the company will benefit from its ability to change.

Francis et al., 2003, in considering transformational capability suggest that there are five management and organisational abilities required if change has any chance of success. These are identified first; as the ability for senior managers to recognise the scale of the organisational changes needed and that they can be achieved; second, that a straight forward strategy is developed together with other options; third, that employees are encouraged to take initiative so that 'internal entrepreneurship' is engendered; fourth, that the communication process with the affected parts of the organisation is enhanced; and fifth, that senior managers have the necessary competencies to manage the change process. In their case study analysis of ten major companies, however, they identified barriers to change even though the companies knew that their macro-environment had changed and it was

Figure 2.1: Organisational Change Model

Determinants of Change



Source: I. McRoy & P. Gibbs (2003)

necessary to become strategically more adept. These barriers, they contend, are “pre-action barriers” and focus around the top management team who seek to circumvent the fact that the environment has changed whilst they have remained static in their approach to the business. Unite this with indecision regarding the best route to take and the result may incite the organisation to become split into different camps. It may be the case that the company finds itself in circumstances where change is necessary but due to financial constraints it is unable to invest. A situation whereby the entrepreneur owner of the organisation, with considerable power, is ill equipped to lead the necessary process and is unwilling to allow what has been developed to be radically reorganised, leads to the inability of many managers to acquire the necessary prowess to undertake the demanding task of change, following years spent managing a steady state organisation.

This is further supported by Nelson (2003), who indicates that change is a complex non-linear exercise and that recognition of environmental turbulence needs to be made. Change does not progressively unfold but comes in stages that can be planned and/or unplanned.

According to Weller (1998), models such as TQM provide a holistic, empowered approach that enables all parties to be involved and most of the quality management principles are used in the change process. Using the expertise of others who have used the model can be valuable in allaying fears and answering many of the practical questions and issues that are bound to surface at this time, which refers to benchmarking (see section 2.1.5). Personal experiences add credibility in developing commitment and observing how others have benefited from the introduction of a new model of change. In an educational setting Champy (1995) maintains that ownership and satisfaction of the changes that are compatible with individuals’ own goals, values and beliefs are essential if the model is to succeed, and this can only come about if employees have developed the delivery system themselves. They become responsible for providing the intended outcomes measured against an evaluation system that they approve of. The TQM model allows individuals and teams to make decisions and solve problems within the overall philosophy of the organisation. When these groups,

internally, embrace a holistic approach that breaks down departmental barriers, and allows the teams to react quickly to the external environment, then change has been accomplished. Equally so this empowered culture enables the needs of the client/student, to be met.

The conclusions that may be drawn from the background to change are, that the change process in itself is complex, without considering the differences within the individual sectors that contribute to change. Environmental scanning is an essential ingredient and managers have to be aware of the pivotal role and the challenges of leadership, motivation, individual and organisational performance skills that are required to enact change as presented in the change model offered by McRoy & Gibbs (2003).

2.1.3 The Cultural Business Change Process

Once the decision has been taken that there is a need to change through the acquisition of a new set of values and beliefs, which managers may have adopted, then the process of building the new culture and designing a process of doing things can begin (Francis et al., 2003). As Champy (1995) indicates, change means completely discarding the old ways and mindsets, and introducing a new way of thinking in a transformational way. This destruction of the old culture is not easy, mainly because the culture is built on myths, ceremonies, rituals, and beliefs concerning the reasons for undertaking these steps (Morgan, 1986; Paton & McCalman, 2000; Carnall, 2003). All of these cultural aspects are absorbed by the organisation over time and in some cases, according to Hoy & Miskel (1996), can interfere with the desirable behavioural norms of the organisation. As Ouchi (1981) found, the culture of a successful enterprise relates to the shared values of trust, cooperation, teamwork and egalitarianism. When employees work toward the same objectives within a shared value system, and where they have freedom to make decisions and be innovatory, then the culture underpinning this results in the production of an efficient and effective process. In high achieving schools and colleges, according to Deal & Kennedy (1984), there are similar values and cultural practices that combine values, customs, tacit assumptions and myths, which compel the process of education.

Depending on the organisation, significant change requires unconventional methods whilst attempting to provide a 'best fit' solution that suits both management and employees, based on the values and beliefs that the management wants to inculcate. The main intent of the organisational change process is to modify the culture, which means that creative thinking is essential by all who are engaged in its making. Management's role in fashioning that culture is important (Champy, 1995; Carnall, 2003; Jones, 2004; Senior & Fleming, 2006). In successful organisations where the process of teamwork and employee ownership have been undertaken, both their work and the long-term success of the organisation, is increased if they are actively involved in problem solving and decision making techniques. The changed organisation inevitably moves the values and beliefs from narrow task orientated roles to multidimensional work functions. Hammer & Champy (1993) and Champy (1995) point out that the organisations that are successful in applying change have created certain value and belief systems. They emphasise that prior to the change process being implemented an adaptation of values must exist. Inevitably, this means that management must dispense with the authoritarian attitude and become leaders who help others to achieve the required changes. They argue that leaders, not managers, realise that quality outputs depend on employees' attitudes, values and knowledge rather than on policies, procedures and prescribed ways of working.

Generally values and beliefs embraced by successful organisations are:

- Empowering team members to make decisions and solve problems free of management intervention, together with permitting the team to operate within and across organisational boundaries.
- Being ethical and moral in the activities that are undertaken.
- A reward structure that is based on achievement.
- All employees are customer focused.
- The provision of training and educational development programmes to allow employees to keep up to date and thereby improve quality (Weller, 1998; Hayes, 2002; Carnall, 2003; Jick & Peiperl, 2003; Burnes, 2004).

The introduction of new belief systems can conflict with the traditional and accepted ways of doing things. Weller (1996a) describes that if the 'old ways' of doing things are not fully discarded then they are likely to take precedence over the new. The security which people have for the 'old ways' can be examined

from several perspectives, namely: fear from the unknown, a sense of insecurity and threat to their power and comfort zone. This is even evident in situations where people are dissatisfied with their current function; any change is seen as a threat. Hammer & Stanton state that:

“when new process values compete with old process values, the result is [employee] frustration, confusion, cynicism and cognitive dissonance” (1995, p. 158).

As such the old process becomes more deeply embedded and future attempts at change are even more difficult (Chaplin, 1996; Senior & Fleming, 2006; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2004).

Internationally, the success rate for the change process exceeds the failure rate, which in turn suggests that the outcomes of applying change models result in both improved achievement and self-esteem improved morale and self-confidence of individuals (Miller, 1995; Green, 1997; Paton & McCalman, 2000). A fundamental question could be; why do some organisations succeed in change whilst others fail? The principle answer lies with the commitment of the leader to ‘unlock’ the existing culture before making any attempt to introduce another. As Lewin’s (1951) field force theory states, there are two distinct forces at work, one is driving change and the other is resisting it. It is then the leader’s responsibility to ensure that they employ the strategies of communication, motivation and creating individual performance to overcome the barriers to change (McRoy & Gibbs, 2003).

2.1.4 Informal ‘Power Agents’

The role of the informal power agents in the change process are noted by Lunenburg & Ornstein (1996), who suggest that leaders will need to win people over if cultural change is to be successful. Within every organisation there are sub-cultures where fertile minds will consider new ideas, therefore, a culture that allows these strengths to surface will benefit. Argris (1993) argues that identification of the ‘power agents’ who have informal power within the organisation is a first step in achieving lasting change. Since these ‘illegitimate’ agents have the confidence of their peer group, leaders who work through and

with them will have a better chance of success in achieving the objectives of change, and are likely to find less resistance to the proposals (Eisenbach et al., 1999; Hayes, 2002; Carnall, 2003). In turn, the new culture will eventually develop its own structures, policies and norms. When the employees have accepted these values, communication skills are required to convince workers that change is needed. The positive aspects of the proposed change need to be clearly communicated including the reasons and benefits that are likely to accrue from implementing the plan. If employees are involved in the whole process, from design to implementation then ownership is engendered. The end result is commitment together with the freedom to express ideas that may well be incorporated in the change process. Subsequently, if employees accept this committed stance they are more likely to be patient with the process. This holistic approach makes the change agent's role much easier since the employees have fully accepted the desired behaviour hoped for by the management. If change agents attempt to impose change then significant resistance and alienation will occur. Hammer & Stanton (1995) caution against using coercion tactics.

Lunenburg & Ornstein (1996) further indicate that these informal leaders are respected and trusted by a loyal peer group following, based on their knowledge, skills, personalities and the rewards they can provide. The peer group is not forced into following the leaders but does by choice since they believe that by giving support they will eventually receive greater benefit. The informal group leaders grow powerful and retain their power by acting within the norms and values of the group. Leaders, who can, therefore, use informal agents by convincing them of the benefits to be gained from adopting the new processes will find it easier to implement change, since they have the power to reduce the resistance to change by modelling their own behaviour on the new processes.

2.1.5 Strategic Benchmarking

A convincing argument for change is to view other similar organisations that have successfully undergone the process. Benchmarking allows this to happen and reduces the negative effects and resistance to change. It, also, has the affect of addressing many questions that may not have been adequately covered in the internal communication process. Benchmarking allows a successful model to be

open to critique, which stimulates new ideas. It is not merely a model to be imitated but one that can be adapted to meet the objectives of the organisation following change (Armstrong, et al., 1997; Carnall, 2003).

During change strategic benchmarking may play a vital role in determining how organisations compare with others in the sector. A comparison of where the organisation stands at present and what improvements may be made during change, are identified through benchmarking. Importantly, benchmarking is a learned technique and supports the proposal that leaders and change agents need to understand what can be gained through this form of diagnosis (Carnall, 2003). In examining the organisation's performance it then becomes an integral part of the diagnostic phase of the change process. In turn, this can stimulate employees to set tough but realistic objectives and targets, and it may be considered an early warning signal of others' competitive advantage (Wilson, 2003).

2.1.6 The Future in the Change Process

If the change seems too large, members might view it as either threatening or unachievable and consequently frustration is likely to follow, which in turn could prove to be devastating for the process (Hitt et al., 1996; Senior & Fleming, 2006). It is, therefore, the responsibility of the senior management team to ensure that the gap is wide enough to be seen as a challenge.

If change is critical to the continued existence of the organisation then, according to Beer & Eisenstat (1996), there is likely to be less resistance. Resistance, especially among the informal power agents, manifests itself by disallowing those new ideas which should be openly discussed, and which challenge the accepted values and beliefs. Change agents, being unable to use this mechanism consequently find it difficult to arrive at a shared conclusion (Beer & Eisenstat, 1996; Jick & Peiperl, 2003; Burnes, 2004). Other authors have suggested that senior managers need to create a crisis situation, in order to reduce the resistance. Some have suggested that the change agency needs to communicate a sense of urgency, or a 'burning platform' for change (Van Buren & Werner, 1996). They further support this by indicating that middle managers are frequently identified as

a major barrier to change, because they feel threatened by the redefining process of their role, from directing to coaching and counselling.

Beekin (1989) suggests that incremental change may be used to best advantage. The fewer the number of employees affected at the beginning means there will be less likelihood of resistance, and as such, there will be greater effectiveness because others are likely to adopt the new changes more readily, having seen the benefits gained by the small group approach.

2.2 Leadership in the Process of Change

The results of the research undertaken by McRoy & Gibbs (2003) indicate that leadership plays a central and important function in the change management process. Just as change is complex, so is the act of leadership which requires those who aspire to lead to be able to communicate the desired vision, model the roles that will lead to effective implementation, and possess the managerial skills to deal with aspects of change such as barriers and fear, as well as being endowed with the ability to recognise and engage with informal power agents who may resist the change process.

As considered in the previous sections, change in its self is likely to be stimulated by external events whether they are political, economic, social or technical. This section is concerned with determining how leadership and its development can enable leaders to respond to change and then lead through this ever changing environment.

There appears to be little agreement in the literature, which qualifies the distinguishing traits a leader should have and which actually explains how they can bring about change. To Vecchio & Appelbaum (1995), leadership is about inducing others to do what he or she wants, but this is perhaps too exploitive. According to Sleeth et al., (1996), supported by Clawson (2006), actions that link people and tasks in order to accomplish work are what leadership is about. The comparison of current and future positions produces a gap, the size of which can have an impact on the change process. Leadership will have a profound effect on how the agenda building is undertaken. The characteristics, which will be

affected by change in the organisation's mission and strategy, will include its functional form, the categorisation of departments, managerial layers, planning and control systems, training and development programmes, centralised functions, delegation and participation (Volberda, 1992; Hughes et al., 2006). These variables and the degree to which they will be affected depend on the flexibility of the structure currently in place. As Kanter et al., (1992) point out; success in organisational change depends on the extent to which all of the above support the new interpretation of what it is to become.

As considered previously, change is generally stimulated from external sources. The triggers, to which Paton & McCalman (2000) refer, create a situation whereby leaders in the organisation need to promote and manage change, whilst at the same time ensuring that change is accepted by those within the organisation. This means that change agents must be able to diagnose the current state of the organisation and its culture, as well as having the desired future state in mind (Brookes & Bate, 1994; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2004). Eccles (1994), supported by Sarros et al., (2002) and Hughes et al., (2006) consider that the leadership strategies for change to be successful are:

- Having a clear purpose.
- Ensuring concordance and trust.
- High-calibre leadership, supported by appropriate structures and resources.
- Building on successful action, with rewards for commitment and track record of achievement.

These findings may indicate that at the various stages within the change process different leadership styles will be necessary; so taking Lewin's model (1951) as an example an innovator is needed to unfreeze the current situation; change agents will then need to overcome the anxiety likely to occur in the second phase and build a sense of ownership; and, finally the maintenance and development of the process will require a set of different skills (Eccles, 1994; Adair, 2005). It follows, then, that one leader or one strategy may not necessarily meet all the demands of all of the phases of change. Successful change management according to Cicmil (1999) is based on several key factors and he found that leaders who

could work along the three dimensions of 'what', the 'how' and the 'why' of changes were those who were able to drive the change forward. His critical factors for success were the ability of leaders and managers to:

- Define and communicate the measurable objects of the changes needed – considered to be the 'what' aspects of change.
- Design a set of tasks that would develop competence, expertise and increase participation in order that the objectives could be achieved – the 'how' aspect.
- Generate additional effort in order to facilitate a systems view and align this with the strategy of the organisation – the 'why' of change.

The same author considers that certain behaviours can impede change which he terms hindered learning and organisational resistance. Resistance, he suggests, arises when employees feel confused because they are unclear as to what the tangible, measurable objectives are, or do not understand how the implementation stage is to be achieved. Both of these are likely to cause low morale, disinterest, lack of enthusiasm and tense interpersonal relationships. Change can be enacted if leaders can overcome these feelings and impedances.

Heiburg et al's (2002) study of change determined that one of the main factors for the success of the initiative was utilising appropriate leadership development. Using the technique of the plan, 'do, check and act', helped change teams to sustain transformation and take renewed action if necessary. Leadership development was undertaken by management teams at different levels in the organisation and also included as an important aspect in network meetings for the exchange of ideas and experiences. Its main focus was on action rather than on mere competence development. This type of work/task-based approach to the development of leaders may be considered a very effective tool in the management of change. For leadership development to be successful, and for it then to be transferred into the workplace, Alimo-Metcalfe & Lawler (2001) consider that four things are required:

- Strong action-learning approach.
- Use of current business issues as the focus of learning.
- Expecting participants to implement the agreed changes.

- Support from top managers, fellow managers and line-managers.

In support of this, according to McCauley et al., (1998) leadership development is a process integrated into the business and consequently support from other managers in the form of support networks is essential if learning is to be applied in the business environment (Conger & Benjamin, 1999; Adair, 2005). The outcome of this research points to the effective use of work-based learning and concentrating on learning through issues in the workplace being solved by the developing team members' ability to deal with 'real life' difficult problems and to implement strategy in the workplace (Dovey, 2002; Hughes et al., 2006).

Research into complex change by MacFarlane et al., (2002) revealed that in the organisations being studied there were not only ownership issues but the success of the change programme was due in the main to the presence of change agents who were committed and enthusiastic about the anticipated changes. The four main problems identified by the case study were, 1) conflicting aims, 2) interface issues, 3) organisational problems, and 4) leadership tensions. Having effective change agents was a key factor in successfully overcoming the issues and enabling the change to move forward (Hayes, 2002; Williams, 2004; Senior & Fleming, 2006). Having managers who are able to engage with such change issues as well as being adept at resolving them would seem to be a sensible way of handling them in order to achieve success in the proposed change initiative.

A case study undertaken by Skjorshammer (2001) which examined the ways in which conflict between management groups could be resolved, devised a system based on action learning and succeeded in creating change through dialogue and making use of local expertise. The new system encouraged managers to deal with conflict situations as soon as they arose rather than suppress them, and to develop their negotiation skills. The success of the programme was aimed at raising awareness amongst managers to be more alert in dealing with conflicts. The author notes that further development programmes have been requested by managers and that other groups have also requested this programme. According to Williams (2004), the fact that non-managers have requested training is an example of how successful initiatives can permeate throughout the organisation.

In considering the issues surrounding the failure of change initiatives Gill (2003) believes that poor leadership rather than poor management may be the cause. The model that he proposes for management involves planning, monitoring and control, whilst focusing on taking tangible steps and corrective action in response to monitoring feedback. Leadership, he contends, is concerned with vision; strategy; cultural and shared values' development; coupled with empowering and motivating those involved. However, Alimo-Metcalfe & Lawler (2001) discovered that the terms 'leadership' and 'management' are often used interchangeably and that private sector companies viewed leaders as individuals who were involved in creating shareholder value, rather than developing people and motivating employees. Yet Williams (2004) considers the latter to be the qualities that leaders need if they are to promote change and drive it forward within their organisations. For Caldwell the distinction between leaders and managers in a change situation can be defined as follows:

“... change leaders are those executives or senior managers at the very top of the organisation who envision, initiate or sponsor strategic change of a far reaching or transformational nature. In contrast, change managers are those middle level managers and functional specialists who carry forward and build support for change within business units and key functions” (2003, p. 291).

This supports the notion that there is probably a need for different individuals to perform different tasks within the change programme and that the “one-model fits all” approach in most situations is invalid.

Managing change with professional groups who value their own autonomy and skill according to Schein (1993) may be problematic if attention is not paid to the state of mind of the individual providing the service. Professionals need to be enabled to change in order for organisations to proceed with the change programme (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Williams, 2004). A useful technique in considering this group was the development of a self-management tool to enable professionals to manage their work and themselves more effectively. This is an indication that self-management techniques can be developed and applied to a professional's working environment in order to improve motivation and empowerment (Brightman, 2000; Williams, 2004).

In conclusion, it may be considered that leadership and its development can be effective in assisting managers to manage change and lead their colleagues through the process. A leader is required to communicate the vision clearly so that all those involved are aware of the direction in which they are heading in order to be able to determine when the objectives have been achieved. Development, it would appear, needs to be located in the professional and work-based context (see Gibbs & McRoy, 2006 for their views on this), if it is to act as an effective instrument in determining successful change outcomes.

2.2.1 Communication

Communication methods are important in the process of change. Information has to be clear, accurate, fast, and devoid of complicated data, so as to encourage questioning of the existing culture and invite debate on the positive and negative aspects of what is being proposed. Consideration is given below to the change agent and the use of the technique of modelling the expected behaviour. Some will view any change process as a threat to their job security or position and role within the organisation. As such the peer leaders can play an important part in trying to convince employees to consider the proposals with an open-mind. However, some will still refuse to accept the notion of change and other methods will need to be adopted in an attempt to illustrate the advantages to be gained (Weller, 1998; Burnes, 2004; Senior & Fleming, 2006). The communication of the organisation's clear vision and mission is essential according to Hitt et al., (1996) if change is to be successfully implemented. Following on from this the change agent needs to create understanding and commitment amongst employees in order to create shared values, together with the actions necessary to achieve success. The organisation's senior managers have various roles to play in order to effect this vision, create a sense of urgency, develop enabling structures, communicate, involve people and be honest, reinforce and institutionalise change (Kanter et al., 1992; Paton & McCalman, 2000; Carnall, 2003).

2.2.2 Role Modelling

A leader needs to model the expected behaviours that are required to be adopted by the rest of the workforce. Leaders who adopt this behaviour themselves and

who encourage others to do so are more likely to achieve success in the change process. Deal & Kennedy (1984) maintain that the role of the leader in adopting new values is a precursor to inculcating the new processes, which are then used to transform the organisation. The same authors state that cultural change has to be systematic and not fragmented and needs to be planned well if it is to be successful. Employees have to be assured that the changes, and the subsequent consequences, are realistic and attainable by them as well as being of intrinsic value. Schein (1985) found that those educational leaders who had a systematic plan and modelled their desired values and behaviours fared better in implementing the new culture. Those leaders with the strength and conviction to see the changes through benefited the organisation by displaying, to the wider environment, a clearer picture of what the mission and objectives of the organisation were (Eisenbach et al., 1999). Conley (1993) further supports this by adding that the way students learn, behave, and what values and beliefs they hold, are determined by the educational culture. Modelling and rewarding appropriate behaviours follows the psychologist B. F. Skinner's approach to learning and is sometimes used in the change process. However, caution should be demonstrated because the rewards process needs to be consistent throughout the organisation. Giving the wrong signals by promoting those employees who do not support the change process will send mixed messages to the rest.

The concept of removing old cultural aspects is further supported by Conley (1993). He believes that culture has such an important role to play in learning, that to have competing beliefs and allegiances over the core values would cause the change process to be significantly impeded.

2.2.3 Implementation by the Change Agent and Leader

Once a model has been agreed then the leader can form large and small focus groups that can be used to vent concerns and discontent as part of the communication process, in order to consider how the implementation process may be successfully achieved. The change agent's role as a leader now becomes one of facilitator maintaining the attention on the achievement of the objectives. There needs to be creativity at this stage, for example, in education the employees need to be challenged to develop quality-learning programmes through quality

delivery of the curriculum. The facilitator role in this respect has to be one of instilling confidence amongst those involved and assuring, them that the outcome can be achieved, thereby building confidence and motivation. It is within these groups where the old values and beliefs should be replaced with new ideas that will eventually be cascaded throughout the organisation. As mentioned previously, however, this rests on several assumptions:

- That the majority buy into the need to see change and seek new ways to improve.
- That there is confidence in the process.
- That the new processes are realistic and achievable.

Meetings that include a large group of employees should be well planned with specific topics that focus the attention of the individuals on the future, the design process and the management issues. The change agent here is the catalyst and provider of information. The leader is guiding the audience to consider the ideal organisation and how it can be achieved (Conner, 1992; Adair, 2005). Change leaders have the responsibility to create an environment in which 'brainstorming' is the norm and whereby the process of developing and communicating new ideas is encouraged (Hammer & Stanton, 1995; Hughes, et al., 2006). Meetings should, therefore, become 'brainstorming' sessions where creative ideas and 'dreaming' dominate (Ulrich, 1997; King & Anderson, 2002). This environment enables barriers to be broken down and internal organisational boundaries to be breached, with ideas being exchanged at all levels. During this process some parts of the old culture may be seen to have value and subsequently be adopted rather than discarded. This in turn, will hold value for those employees who cling to old assumptions and ways of working. If some aspects of the current culture are included even though slightly modified, this is likely to help calm fears and encourage employees to be involved in the process. Weller (1998) considers that the smaller focus groups allow individuals to discuss deeper issues following brainstorming sessions, thus providing a less threatening environment where discussions and ideas can be exchanged without fear of embarrassment. The change agent circulates among groups acting as the resource person, providing the knowledge, information and clarification to questions and concerns in the struggle to explain new aspects of change (Conner, 1992; Carnall, 2003). Even so, some

employees will want to retain cultural aspects that have no place in the new system.

At this stage the change agent becomes a persuader by addressing each concern using evidenced information based on the benchmarking exercise. The time taken to convince people is both the most important and essential part of effective leadership (Ulrich, 1997; Hughes et al., 2006). When groups have discussed the issues and consensus is achieved in the large group sessions, and when individual doubts and fears have been alleviated then commitment is more likely to be engendered. Bechard & Pritchard (1992), state that the development of vision and mission statements follows on from this discussion process. A clear vision comes from the adoption of core values, agreed patterns of behaviour, future aspirations and purpose. The mission examines a realistic and attainable position based on the core values and attitudes.

The change agent should at this stage stress the need for shared ownership by identifying the values and beliefs and by reinforcing a commitment to develop the new culture. The strength of the organisation's internal capabilities and ability to communicate vision and mission to employees is essential. Leadership skills, training programmes and investment accomplishments will determine how management sets its objectives (Buchanan & Boddy, 1992; Eisenbach et al., 1999; Hughes et al., 2006). Historical goal setting data will affect how successful the changes will be. For example; what goals in the past were unrealistic; were there poor communication channels and lack of commitment from the top that impeded the change process (Felkins et al., 1993)? Dutton (1988) proposes that there is an agenda building process in change that is influenced through examining the effects of change, the personal stakes involved and the goal setting techniques. In work undertaken by Hammer & Stanton (1995) and Champy (1995) the leader is crucial to the change process. Leaders need to be able to prepare their employees to meet the innovatory challenges of the future by establishing pro-active behavioural patterns, which will encourage broader thinking. As Davies & Ellison (1997) indicate, supported by Adair (2005), leaders of the future will need to prepare an organisation to meet the demands of that, which has yet to be

developed, and be able to interpret this as a reality to the key players in the organisation.

The conclusion that may be drawn from the review of the business management literature is that change initiatives are likely to be complex and affected by a number of factors such as; the external environment, the values and belief systems and importantly the culture of the organisation. The models discussed focus on many aspects of change and in some cases such as TQM and business re-engineering have proved to be inadequate in being able to support effective change fully. This is due to over complex models that fail to address the fundamental issues of how to manage the change process and so promotes a need to consider the human aspects of change management which are revealed in the literature of leadership. Communication, empathy and role modelling are the skills and abilities that leaders and change agents need to adopt in order to implement successful change.

2.3 Change Management in Higher Education

Increasing globalisation, government initiatives, doing more with less, improving the quality of student learning and the learning experience, the pressures for change in higher education are evident on all sides and the pace of change is ever increasing. Change is endemic. Living with change and managing the process is an essential skill for all those in education both at a personal and professional level. Managing change in universities is a difficult task, generally undertaken at times of pressure on budgets and with unclear objectives (Meister-Scheytt & Scheytt, 2005). When contemplating change in higher education the use of Shattock's (2005) research on entrepreneurialism in the university sector was taken into consideration. However, this work was believed to be too specific and although it examined significant change processes it was felt that it did not fall within the objectives of this particular project.

May & Buck (1995), note how the socio-political climate has introduced the quasi-market systems to the public sector, which are aimed at achieving greater efficiency in the use of resources and greater responsiveness to 'clients'. This has created a change in management style and:

“... a proliferation in planning meetings, consultation and organisational development workshops, during which time objectives, performance indicators and targets [are] set, budgets drawn and new roles and tasks defined” (para. 3.15).

UK based higher education has experienced the full impact of this cultural change, and:

“Universities must now maintain standards despite attenuated resources; educate a more diverse range of students; introduce more flexible curricula, including new forms of learning delivery and assessment; teach and research more intensively; prepare students for employment more effectively; contribute to improved economic competitiveness and to local economic success; and replace public investment with the merchant’s penny whenever they are able” (Robertson, 1997, p. 88).

The acknowledgment that multiple changes are required should be considered since isolating just one aspect might lead to neglecting the impact of the others, which may in turn act as inducements or barriers to the achievement of change.

This indicates that any strategy for change needs to be viewed in the context of other transformations occurring within the educational system and whether or not they are likely to influence the anticipated change in a positive or negative manner. The recognition of such external forces means that some consideration should be given to the options that arise during the implementation process and the need to inform discussion amongst the change participants.

A number of educational texts adopt the position of a rationalist approach which involves separating the knowledge aspect from the actions to be undertaken (Dant & Francis, 1998). Adopting this model means that the goals are identified; lines of action are proposed, and consequences are considered. This is exemplified in the traditional strategic planning approach. As House (1981) discusses, from this perspective effective action is dependent upon the ‘rational organisation of knowledge’, assuming that implementation barriers can be anticipated and subsequently managed. This ‘technological’ approach, however, fails to recognise the complexity of change (Bruntman, 1987; Firestone & Corbett, 1988),

whereas, in contrast, House's 'political perspective' acknowledges this complexity and recognises the problem of potentially divergent interests of different stakeholders, and the scope of conflict and the impact of incentives. House further identifies the 'cultural perspective', which:

"... reinterprets divergent interests as the results of differences stemming from enduring values and cognitions of those involved in change processes" (Firestone & Corbett, 1988, p. 323).

From this viewpoint, culture and values that are embedded within the organisation have a key effect in the way that change is accepted and implemented.

It is important to recognise that culture has an important effect on change, but writers such as Tsoukias (1995) and Dant & Francis (1998), recognise that there are other actions which are not guided by a set of rules – actions in which they posture that contingency is different from the rationalist model. Thus, on the one hand, there is the rationalist model which provides procedures and methods in order to maximise effectiveness, and on the other hand, an opposite viewpoint of contingency theory that emphasises:

"... the decisions of managers are taken pragmatically in the flow of practical activities and shaped by the circumstances of the moment" (Dant & Francis, 1998, para. 2.8).

It would appear that there is an element of truth in both conceptions in that the research indicates recurring themes in successful change management, which implies certain 'procedures' but at the same time is not able to predict all the potential events that may transpire. In educational change this would seem to be particularly appropriate due to the complex nature of the sector and the individuality of the institutions coupled with the freedom of academics who operate within the system.

Two major weaknesses may be considered in this somewhat over simplification of change, and Bowe & Ball indicate that more often than not it is assumed in the first that any change can be viewed in isolation, and secondly, that institutional history is often neglected. They suggest that:

“Change is set within, and is accommodated to, the micro political history of the institution” (1992, p. 141).

The political stance further recognises the different positions within an organisation and that:

“... innovations are interpreted and responded to on the basis of divergent interests and the perspectives of different organisational members” (ibid., p. 142).

As such the conception of a change model favoured will ultimately impact on the implementation strategy.

In activating a change, initiative does not mean that it will be totally implemented as Fullan (1991) recognises it is easy:

“... to adopt complex, vague, inefficient and costly (especially if someone else is paying) innovations as long as they do not have to implement them” (1991, p. 60).

The question then arises as to what influences the implementation of a change initiative. In this regard White (2000), maintains that an effective model for change should, therefore, be iterative and recognises that managers be prepared to plan ahead. Thus the change strategy should be:

“... able to allow for both deliberate (i.e. planned for) and emergent outcomes to be successful” (ibid., p. 166).

He argues that this should inevitably mean the involvement of all stakeholders in the change process plus the different agencies, with possibly conflicting values, which should be addressed in order to bring about reforms. Dipaola & Hoy (2001), similarly argue that conflict should be openly accepted so that the change process can follow a more constructive path. Milliken (2001) identifies the divergent interests within a university department and advocates a ‘surfacing’ of ‘micropolitics’ to bring about change. Richardson (1995) sees financial funding as a critical resource and postulates that the UK government and students have

increasing power as stakeholders. From this it may be deliberated in the future that students, as 'consumers', will be able to influence increasingly the nature of changes in higher education. However, Fullan (2001) notes that there is a need for the state to provide an amalgamation of 'accountability' and 'capacity building'.

It is worth considering at this point that change in higher education may face difficulties if members of the institution are asked to implement multiple and sometimes incompatible goals, which in turn may lead to resistance. Before 'blaming' staff for resistance, the arguments made by Gross et al., (1971), that the following aspects which are often overlooked by those enacting change should be taken into account:

- Employees who are not resistant initially may encounter implementation difficulties.
- Leaders may not provide the support required to implement the change.
- Members who essentially support the change may become negative if they face frustration in the implementation process.

From this analysis, leadership in the process of change is highlighted, which is often perceived to be the critical factor in ensuring successful change and:

"... essential in order to create vision, communicate policy and deploy strategy" (Davies et al., 2001, p. 1026).

Leadership is generally distinguished as being different from management in that the former is concerned with envisioning change. Middlehurst (1995) maintains that in order to achieve a shared vision, leadership needs to be in place at different levels within the organisation, and Gregory (1996), argues that owing to the complexity of change and the necessary activities that are required, then leadership should be shared (see Dewey, 1975; Giroux, 1994; Purpel, 1998 for their views on this). Further, Gregory contends that:

"... where justice, equality and participation are, key philosophical beliefs, ... the leadership itself needs to be participatory and democratic" (1996, p. 49).

An optimistic view is taken by Middlehurst (1989); Slowey (1995) and Gregory (1996), who see the potential in universities for managing change through 'dispersed leadership' based on collegiality, participation and collaboration. This may then return us to the issue of culture, which according to Johnson (1992), is represented by the core values, beliefs and attitudes held by employees. Accordingly, organisational change is more likely to be successfully implemented if it is in-line with the cultural norms. Weil (1999) concurs with this general position but disputes the idea that in higher education there is cultural unity, and she goes on to suggest that there needs to be incentives to support systemic learning rather than concentrating on the bureaucracy involved in quality initiatives. Systemic reform is supported by Fullan (1993) who believes there has to be a necessary relationship between culture and structure. Similarly, Seller, states:

"Restructuring and reculturing mean that the organisational manner of conducting business, as well as the values that underpin the operation, must both change" (2001, p. 256).

This may support Senge's (1990) argument that it is necessary to build an internal capacity for development in terms of the learning organisation whereby all members are prepared to reflect and learn from their own experiences.

The plurality and complexity of universities as organisations is well documented (Bruntman, 1987; Hardy, 1991; Smith & Langslow, 1995; McNay, 1995; Green, 1997; Mintzberg, 1998). Universities are professional service organisations (Hardy, 1991; Mintzberg, 1998) and the professionals within them vary in their training, interests and methods of working. Faculties and programmes of study operate in various ways and the differences between groups within the university are likely to be significant. As such, managing this diversity is a complex business (Meister-Scheytt & Scheytt, 2005).

The commitment to change is based directly or indirectly on the fundamental moral purpose of education 'to make a difference to students' lives' (Fullan,

1993). Making complex change in education invites many choices and decisions made at the organisational level, which may create conflicts in what an individual values and believes. As a consequence an individual experiences anxiety in many organisational change processes (Slowey, 1995; McCluskey, 2004). Meister-Scheytt & Scheytt (2005), go further by bearing in mind that the individuals of an organisation are 'idiosyncratic and often obstinate' but are experts when it comes to arguing.

When planning for change it is helpful to consider higher education institutions as large, complex social systems, which continually change in unforced and uncertain ways. In everyday relationships and interactions amongst people, new behavioural styles emerge through social interaction rather than by way of considered management actions (Jackson, 2005). At the same time complex change tends to take place when other changes are being undertaken in the environment, and everything is moving at once (Bruntman, 1987; Eoyong & Olson, 1998). As such, complex change can be determined as being complicated. Stacey supports the notion that higher education institutions are large and complex adaptive social systems:

“... a complex and adaptive system consists of a large number of agents, each of which behaves according to its own principles of local interaction. No individual agent (e.g. teacher or administrator), or group of agents (e.g. teaching team or department) determines the patterns of behaviour that the system as a whole displays or how these patterns evolve, and neither does anything outside the system” (2000, p. 42).

Those who are sympathetic in their support for improving and creating strategies for implementation should be fully cognisant of the complexity of change. They should be conscious of, and sensitive to, the ways in which departmental teams respond and organise in reaction to change, in manners that are often unpredictable. It becomes a necessary requirement to ensure that teams and individuals within them understand and take ownership of change to gain improvements. As Fullan (2003), suggests those responsible for initiating change processes need to be aware of what he calls the 'edge of order', or as Stacey

(2000) refers to as the 'edge of chaos', the place where most people occupy their working lives.

By definition, change projects involve changing and are likely to be successful if they embrace people and encourage them to change. Similarly, the change plans evolve themselves as they are being implemented and this complicates the matter further when people realise that learning what they need to do to change, is not what they anticipated. It is not surprising, therefore, that a particular change initiative for improvement may well be resisted. So, when it comes to evaluating whether the change is successful, difficulties arise (Slowey, 1995; Jackson, 2005). As is probably the norm in many higher educational environments, evaluation is extremely difficult because change occurs in different ways: for different reasons; in different contexts, and at different rates.

Eoyong & Olson (1998), consider that most evaluation processes are based on performance set against predicted goals, and that where an organisation is uncomplicated this process may prove adequate. However, in more complex environments the authors suggest that it is necessary to investigate the patterns of behaviour that emerge in complex systems over time. The evaluation of complex organisational change is an important issue in UK higher education. In looking for institutional evaluation with special emphasis on the implementation of personal development, planning reveals that such data is lacking in spite of the efforts to develop policy and practice across the UK (Jackson et al., 2004). It would appear that the ability to develop exceeds the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of what has been developed. It would seem that a lower priority is given to evaluation in change initiatives, yet the use of evaluation is critical to aiding complex adaptive human systems to understand better the changes that need to be made as the process evolves.

In the UK substantial changes have taken place within the university sector for more than two decades. These changes are similar to those which have occurred across the public sector as a result of government policy and funding aimed at outcomes and may be viewed as 'directed innovations' (Hannan & Silver, 2000). New demands have been placed on managers in creating competitive and hybrid

organisations with particular management challenges (Mackintosh et al., 1994). The uncertainty created by such levels of change is significant and creates new strategic challenges for managers in these contexts and begs the question: how can university managers operate successfully in this changing environment? How can any group of managers reach conclusions in order for the organisation to move forward? The adoption and implementation of such change, however, will be influenced by a wide range of factors. Fullan claims:

“... the number and dynamics of factors that interact and affect the process of educational change are too overwhelming to compete in anything resembling a fully determined way” (1991, p. 47).

Many educational organisations have enjoyed success by adopting such models as referenced in the range of literature available, although little research has been carried out in this particular sphere of change from college to university status (Squires et al., 1984; Murgatroyd & Morgan, 1993; Schmoker & Wilson, 1993; Weller & Hartley, 1994; Weller, 1996b; Short & Greer, 1997). According to Senge (1990), educational change, lies within the process of education, in that many faculty work in isolation, within a classroom and departmental environment. As Blackwell & Preece (2001) point out, the first loyalty of academic staff is to their profession or sub-discipline, rather than to their school or department, which tends to be their second source of loyalty. The institution seems to be even further down the list.

There is recognition that the particular elements of collegiate culture can resist meaningful change. Individual departments in universities exercise largely unquestioned authority over curricular and pedagogical decisions, even when these affect other departments. Within departments, individual faculty operate largely as independent entrepreneurs, enjoying accorded unprecedented freedom from supervision with regard to how they do their work. This means that successful change initiatives in higher education settings rely on pursuing diffusion and voluntary adoption far more than top-down implementation (Fairweather, 1996). This emphasises that successful change initiatives in higher education should respond creatively to established academic cultures and modes of behaviour, rather than attempting to change by imposing an alien alternative

structure. The number of changes in curriculum design, together with assessment procedures and grading systems that have been introduced to faculty over the last decade precipitates distrust of yet another change process being claimed to satisfy all the stakeholders' needs. It can be considered, however, that education, as a business, may be urged to rethink the current educational delivery and support systems in order to ensure that outputs are more aligned to meet the global economy with competitive markets and increasing pressures to produce a flexible and continually learning workforce – the student. The ability for students to perform successfully in the wider environment is central to the mission of educational organisations.

The work which has been undertaken by Davis & Ellison (1997), points to an ever-increasing gap between what is provided by education and the requirements of the new century. Educational managers should, therefore, be aware of the expectations of the environment in which they operate; be able to design an organisational structure with the necessary in-built processes to deliver these requirements, and determine the role of individuals to meet obligations. This has direct implications both for those delivering and on those receiving the service. In turn, this impinges directly on the delivery mechanisms, which are required to reflect this flexibility so as to respond to external environmental pressures.

Managers, accordingly, should rethink both the role of the supplier and client for new services. This would mean identifying who really is the core customer and thus implementing a delivery system to meet their needs and expectations (Applebaum et al., 1998). The standard requirements of commercial organisations are to produce high quality products at a competitive price and optimum service (Hammer & Champy, 1993). Organisations that deliver this are more likely to survive. Davies & Ellison (1997) further indicate that students choose services, which afford better information, possess a reputation for quality, and institutions so structured are best suited to remain in business. To identify core customers is, therefore, imperative for economic survival. The redesign or reengineering of curriculum delivery systems may be necessary if higher education is to increase quality outputs whilst reducing overall costs, and this is essential if the number of students is to increase.

The external environmental background has a number of critical implications for education, especially in a marketplace such as in the island of Cyprus, with considerable competition. Organisational managers would need to concentrate on engendering critical and high quality thinking skills underpinned with the ability to use the latest technology, together with the development of teams who should be able to adapt quickly to the marketplace and design learning strategies that give rise to problem solving and decision making. The approach may need to be holistic rather than simply incremental in nature. In order to ensure that all employees are involved in the process, those responsible for curriculum development would need to apply creative methods to implement this new approach to teaching and learning.¹

In context with other organisations, higher education institutions are trying to maintain efficiency, effectiveness and economy (Grant, 2003; Dobson & McNay, 1996), by adopting private sector managerial techniques to deliver and perform the managerial function. The pressure for change in UK higher education institutions comes from a number of interrelated factors, i.e. the expansion of HE towards massification and an increasing number of more mature students who see education as an opportunity for lifelong learning. This in turn, is gradually changing the student profile together with pressures from the business environment, to produce graduates with both thinking and practical skills resulting in increased competition between institutions in order to secure survival. It would appear that these factors are driving higher education in the UK to develop managerial techniques in order to meet these challenges of change.

Due mainly to the multiplicity of stakeholders and the changing balance of power between them this tends to create a political dimension to change. Blackwell & Preece (2001) consider that for internal change agents, the challenge has been the growing interest in government, triggered by the interest of the treasury to protect tax-payers' money, raise productivity and create a mass system whilst at the same time maintaining the three E's. As a result academic staff feel that their

¹ In the final analysis, educational establishments are about educating students and not merely the employment of faculty and support staff.

professional autonomy and academic freedom are under threat. Senior managers are in the position of striving to protect their institutions whilst at the same time professing ownership of change which, in fact, hails from one of these external sources (Clarke & Newman, 1997). This may result in rivalries between disciplines and personal jockeying for position, especially for those within institutions, who aspire to positions of leadership, which in turn adds further pressure to the nature of change. The professional autonomy of staff and the fact that collegiality is entrenched may make it difficult to engender change, even if desirable, especially for change agents (Blackwell & Preece, 2001).

When considering large scale multi-faceted change, a framework is often helpful within which to operate. This can help to ensure that most aspects of the proposed change are considered. In reading much of the management literature it would suggest that change can be a planned and orderly process if the correct procedures are followed. In reality, especially the large scale of change that is envisaged by this research, there are few logical rules that can be applied. In this sense, complexity theory and a view of organisations as complex open adaptive systems, considers some of the realities and arguably provides a model of best practice for change in higher education. The emphasis is placed on creating the conditions that are best suited for the change to occur (Lewin & Regine, 1999; Olsen & Eoyang, 2001).

Much of the literature focuses on the techniques and procedures for long-term strategic planning, with emphasis on creating visions and missions; on creating shared values and strong cultural identity; on the equation of success with consensus, consistency, uniformity and order (Hefce Good Management Practice Project 201, 2003). However, in complex environments that constitute higher education institutions, the main management task is being able to cope with unpredictability, clashing counter-cultures, disensus, contention, conflict and inconsistency. As Stacey (1996) identifies, the following form the basis of complexity theory that can be readily applied to institutions of higher education:

- Organisations are a tangle of irregular feedback loops connected to other people and organisations by a further tangle of irregular feedback loops.

- These feed back systems are able to operate in states of stable and unstable equilibrium, or even at the edges of chaos.
- Organisations are pulled towards stability by the forces of integration and the desire by people within them for security and adaptation to the environment. They may also be pulled towards division and decentralisation due to the human desire for excitement, innovation and isolation from the environment, as such organisations are paradoxes.
- If the organisation becomes too stable it may fail because it cannot change easily, on the other hand if it becomes too unstable then it can self destruct. As such, success lies in sustaining an organisation between stability and instability – an often difficult and dissipative structure.
- In a successful organisation the dynamics are, therefore, those of irregular cycles and discontinuous trends. The internal dynamics of a successful organisation may mean that it faces unknowable and specific futures.
- Managers within the system cannot be in control of its long-term future, nor are they able to develop specific frameworks or step-by-step analytical tools to ensure its long-term development. They are only able to focus on the immediate or short term.
- The longer term development is essentially spontaneous and emerges from the strategic planning process, supported by self-organisation and interaction and learning in groups. In this way managers create and discover the environment and the long-term futures of organisations.

In order to operate in this type of environment, it is argued that a high level of interaction amongst organisational members, especially those involved in change, is required. Change here cannot be driven but must be fostered and supported. Olson & Eoyang's (2001) Complex Adaptive System (CAS) model supports change which is based on complexity theory. As part of this, there is growing interest in the development that addresses the challenges of reaching new levels of effectiveness in creating and sharing tacit knowledge in organisations. Miles et al., (2000) predict that collaboration will be the meta-capability of successful organisations in the twenty-first century. This is evidenced by the emerging

trends in the development of communities of practice, and recognition of skills such as storytelling for more effective knowledge sharing (Wenger, 2000; Denning, 2001). Communities of practice have been defined by Wenger et al., (2002) as groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an on-going basis.

The management literature reveals that change is complex in nature and requires managers to employ a range of skills and abilities to enact the change process. The literature confirms that identifying the need to change is an essential requirement and once this has occurred then employing effective leadership strategies is vital. Where organisations require transformational change it is a case of deciding what not to change in order to engage with those factors that are in most need of it. In the incremental change process concern is levelled at environmental scanning and being clear about the sectoral developments and best practice. In both situations leadership qualities are essential and the literature reveals this to be the central pillar in successful implementation.

Leaders have to involve followers, whilst at the same time enacting different leadership styles in order to communicate the expected outcomes of the change process. This will entail detailed consideration of the internal and external environments in order to diagnose and plan the desired steps. Leadership skills are crucial in order to recognise and target the correct moves. They are also essential in order to develop and implement the necessary strategies for change and to foresee and overcome the barriers. But, because of the nature of the collegiate of higher education, a follower leader model might be more appropriately reinterpreted as a collaborative activity and this will be investigated in the following chapters.

2.3.1 Leading Change in Higher Education

As revealed in the background to change (section 2.1.1), Kotter's (1995) work identifies important steps in effecting change, and although derived from a business perspective, it may have validity for change in higher education, especially change of a transformational nature, which is apparent in the move

from college to university status. His eight steps which outline the necessary conditions that business leaders should pursue if change is to be effective are listed here in order to provide the lens through which educational change can be considered:

1. Establish a sense of urgency: examine the external environment, both market and competitive realities. Identify and discuss crises; potential crises and major opportunities.
2. Form a powerful guiding coalition: assemble a group with enough power to lead the change effort and encourage the group to work together as a team.
3. Create a vision: this helps direct the change effort. Develop strategies to support that vision.
4. Communicate the vision: use every vehicle possible to communicate the new vision and strategies. The coalition has to lead by example.
5. Empower others to act: remove the obstacles to change. Change structures that undermine the vision, encourage risk-taking and non-traditional ideas, activities and actions.
6. Plan for, and create, short-term wins: plan for visible improvements in performance, create those improvements and recognise and reward employees involved.
7. Consolidate improvements: use increased credibility to change systems, structures and policies that do not fit the vision. Hire, promote and develop employees who can implement the vision. Reinvigorate the process with new projects, themes and change agents.
8. Institutionalise the approach: articulate the connections between new behaviours and corporate success. Develop the means to ensure leadership development and succession.

Much of what Kotter considers here has resonance with Lewin's (1946, 1947) work of unfreezing, change and refreezing as discussed previously. Kotter, however, makes a clear distinction between management and leadership in that management is concerned with applying a set of processes that ensure the system operates smoothly. Leadership, he postulates, defines the future and aligns people with the future. Kotter (1995) argues that too much emphasis, especially in

complex environments, is placed on managing change, and insufficient consideration given to leading change. It may then be the case that in universities, leadership is not the sole preserve of senior management, but leadership of change may extend to any part and any level within the institution.

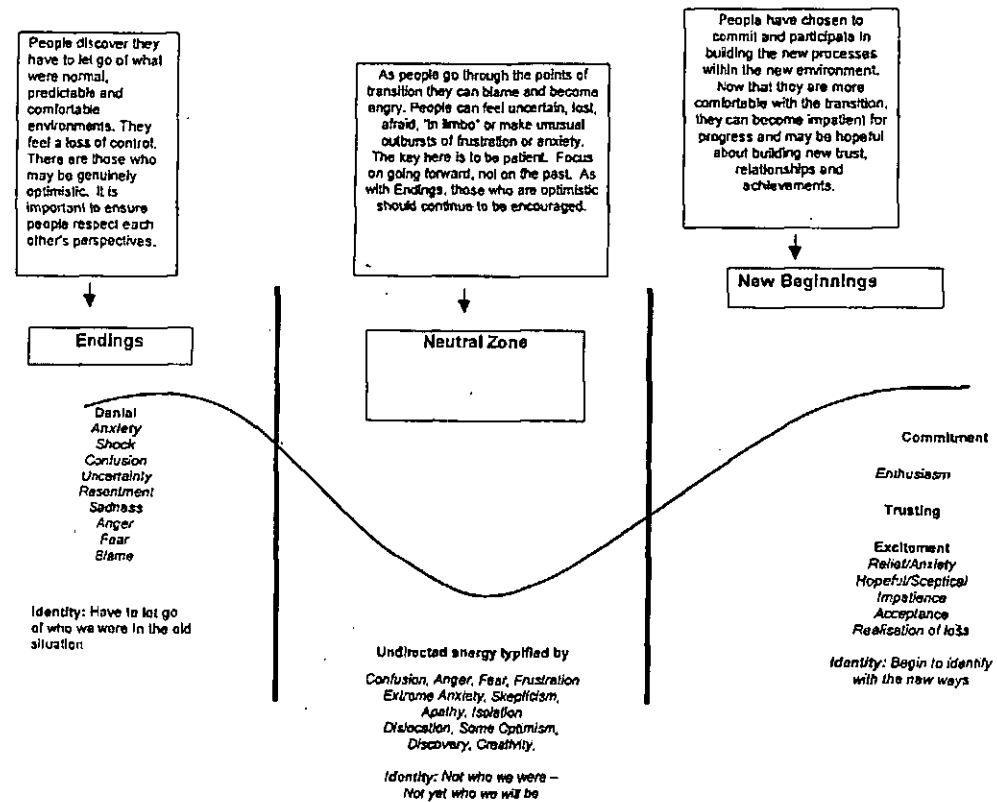
Effectively identifying the need to change goes to the very heart of leadership. In an organisation that only needs to respond slowly to an incrementally changing environment, then observation of the necessary conditions for change in the sector is the main requirement. In turbulent environments, it is more about deciding what not to change and later being capable of managing the multiple changes likely to be required in order to maintain congruence with the sector's requirements.

Jeffreys (1995) and Bridges (2003), consider the notion of transition management, which examines the role of leaders in bringing about effective change through a transitional process. According to them, the transitional period is generally the phase during which people resist and it is not necessarily the change itself. They consider that change effectively involves shifts in the external environment that produce a significant impact on the organisation. In the transitional phase they appraise the psychological effects on people as they come to terms with the change, as a process of inner experience. In essence people resist giving up their identity as it is expressed in their current work, and resist the chaos and uncertainty that involves many change initiatives.

Bridges (2003) identifies three phases of the transition process, 1) endings, 2) neutral zone, and 3) new beginnings. A simplified version is shown in figure 2.2 (p. 57) and is a useful tool in identifying the issues that people might face during change. When managing change it is important to recognise that transition is an individual reaction. The role of the change agents is to nurture others throughout the transitional process toward new beginnings whilst maintaining the level of activity. This model and its implications reflect much of the work undertaken by Lewin (1951), in the development of his unfreeze/refreeze model. As such, like any organic process, change cannot be made to happen just by a word or act

alone, it needs to be encouraged, supported and reinforced if it is to be successfully implemented.

Figure 2.2: Transition Curve



Source: Hefce Good Management Practice Project 201 (2003)

2.3.2 Conclusion

Educational change management is a very complex issue and may focus on a combination of examining any one of a number of subjects whether it be objectives, structure, resources, people or an amalgam. It is frequently difficult, challenging, and in some cases even messy. In considering the evidence from the research institutions it is clear that there is not one simple change methodology that fits all, and Scott's (1999) observations would seem to support this observation.

In looking through the lens at the business literature there is much that can be seen in the educational literature but there is still blurred vision (myopia?) in higher

education. There are issues that still need to be explored. Change in business is concerned with the relevant business to business improvements in the same sector and within the same ideology. The change management literature helps education in the business context, in the sense of operating as a business: But as Bourdieu (1986) considers, education is in a different sector and field, and as such, the actions are not easily transferable because of the different ideology and the education literature fails to fully address this.

There are many types of change and different approaches to managing change and it is an area of research that has experienced its fair share of theories, quick fixes and guaranteed solutions. Determining an approach which is suitable to the institution and the individuals who will have to implement the proposed solution is at the centre of the discussion on how an effective and professional manager in higher education will enact the change. This is the challenge that affects all those who aspire to change an organisation and it often involves the aspects of processes, people and culture.

In the past, and as viewed in the literature, emphasis has concentrated mainly on processes which suggest that if correct, then everything else will automatically fall into place. In this research it is evidenced that each aspect is equally important. In discussing change issues with individuals who have had to action change management, the outcomes are considered not only from a theoretical perspective but from a practical application. The good practice, tools and guidance for managing change is drawn from the lessons learned by those actively involved in the day to day activities of managing and changing very diverse and complex organisations. To summarise the outcomes at this stage it would indicate that:

- Change is not easy and for management there are no quick fix solutions.
- Processes and procedures need to be adapted and continually 'tuned' to meet the emerging requirements.
- Leadership and teamwork are part of the critical success factors which ensure the ongoing implementation of change initiatives.
- Culture is the most difficult aspect to change and it is necessary to 'work at it' if long-term change is to be achieved.

- Communication is the essential and overriding tool that will ensure the success or failure of any change programme.

In researching the literature there are many different theories, approaches and methods. Some of these form part of the practical outcomes of this research, especially results that have resonance with those contributed by others who have provided examples of their experiences and the practical difficulties encountered when managing change. Change affects everyone in the institution and these material outcomes will be of interest to those involved in managing the change process; senior and middle managers, new and experienced managers; academic and support managers.

In attempting to find an answer and possible strategy to a change problem it is worth considering Scott's (1999) key outcomes to change management:

- There are substantially more options for improvement than there is time or resources to consider them.
- The recognition that change is not a single event but a complex process that involves a learning/unlearning process for all of those involved.
- The most successful changes are always the result of team effort in which the most appropriate and best positioned people are involved in a process of action learning.
- The change process is iterative and cyclical and definitely not linear.
- Change is not automatic, it has to be led.
- There is always a mixture of internal and external forces coupled with individual action.
- That looking outside as well as inside for viable solutions and ideas is an important facet.
- When considering development and enhancements to learning programmes, this also generates a need for improvements in the systems and infrastructure that underpins them.

At this stage it might be useful in supporting Scott's proposals to consider Fullan's thought on the best way to adopt change:

“‘Ready, fire, aim’ is the more fruitful sequence if we want to take a linear snapshot of an organisation undergoing major reform. Ready is important, there has to be some notion of direction, but it is killing to bog down the process with vision, mission and strategic planning before you know enough about the dynamic reality. Fire is action and inquiry where skills, clarity and learning are fostered. Aim is crystallising new beliefs, formulating mission and vision statements and focussing strategic planning. Vision and strategic planning come later, if anything they come at step 3 not step 1” (1993, p. 23).

If we then take the propositions by both Fullan and Scott and couple them with the outcomes from the interview sessions with those who have and are implementing change initiatives in the UK higher education system, it would seem sensible to propose the type of tools and techniques that might be appropriate for Intercollege in Cyprus. The educational literature supports the eight conditions laid down by Kotter (1995) that essentially demand that senior managers must possess the leadership qualities to enact managerial change, and that it is necessary to set the correct environment in order to achieve the desired results. The business management literature further supports the notion that it is possible to examine educational change through the lens of business change processes. But as considered earlier, it has not addressed the issues identified.

The literature review exposes a number of questions that require investigation as to how higher education institutions ensure that change initiatives are undertaken together with how those with the responsibility to enact the change undertake the challenge.

This would entail the examination of how academic managers who hold managerial positions deal with the multiplicity of differentiated but interrelated management tasks in the change process. Coupled with this is the influence that higher education has on a number of multiple stakeholders with an extensive range of specialist knowledge and priorities. As such, it is necessary to investigate how any potential conflicts can be managed by the appointed change agents. There is, also the need to examine what practical actions should be adopted by the leaders in the implementation process. These aspects are unclear for Intercollege

in its move to university status, but they will need to be addressed if the future changes required of it are to be implemented effectively.

This further leads into the research methodology in terms of probing the issues of how this ought to be undertaken as well as providing guidance regarding the rationale behind the research in this project. This supports the objective of determining a benchmarked model that can be applied through a process of action and which involves managers in the development of leadership qualities.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

It is suggested by Easterly-Smith et al., (1991) that the basic belief in positivism is that “the world is external and objective” (p. 27). Positivism is generally associated with quantitative research approaches which aim to measure phenomena. The basic belief in phenomenology, in contrast, is that “the world is socially constructed and subjective” (ibid.), and this is associated with more qualitative methods to research. These aim:

“to describe, decode, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world” (Van Maanen, 1983, p. 9).

By taking the middle ground as realists, Hubermann & Miles (1994) suggest,

“... social phenomena exist not only in the mind, but in the objective world as well” (p. 429).

They acknowledge that perceptions of reality and to some extent reality itself will vary as such between individuals and groups, but at the same time there are stable relationships which can be considered as real (Hubermann & Miles, 1994). The approach for researchers working within this paradigm is to use either qualitative or quantitative methods or data, and frequently both may be used.

The intended research philosophy underpinning this project is realism (ibid.), which is positioned on the continuum between phenomenology and positivism (Symons, 1996). This author argues that realism is a pragmatic paradigm, whereby the views of those researchers advocating either phenomenology or positivism are tempered by the needs of researchers to understand context, and those who need to discover knowledge that may be transferred to different situations. In research connected with managing organisations this would seem to

have some relevance since organisations are set in specific contexts, but managers seek rules or theories that can be implemented in order to understand and improve the effectiveness of the organisation in question.

Within positivist research it is intended that some distance be maintained from the phenomenon of study, so as to reduce the possibility of interfering with evidence and with the results of the study as a consequence. Frequently the studies are deductive, beginning with a theory and subsequently testing it in the data. Quantitative instruments are typically used to measure the phenomenon and statistical techniques of analysis adopted to understand them. Particularly important are sampling strategies as statistical interference between the observed cases and the larger population are typically made. It might be, however, that these methods result in a lack of contextual understanding, meaning and depth. Whether or not real objectivity from the phenomenon is achievable might be considered also, as perhaps might be the case where prior theory, for instance, influences the data collection and subsequent analysis.

Those engaging in the phenomenological approach to research frequently engage directly with who or what they are studying, so as to achieve the objective of revealing and exploring the internal worlds of, or the worlds created by, those being studied. Within this paradigm it may be deliberated that the researcher is gathering qualitative data in order to interpret this information. Often this inductive approach to research derives from data towards meaningful theory and categorisations. Researchers using these techniques use well-articulated methodologies and claim internal and external validity. It should, however, be considered that given the interaction between the observer and the observed there is no guarantee that a different researcher examining the same context would necessarily come to the same conclusions. Also, given the relatively small number of observations normally undertaken, the generalisability of the findings may be limited.

3.1.1 Positionality

Consideration must be paid to the author's positionality with regard to the research process. It is a fact that the author is employed by Intercollege and those

interviewed will be colleagues known to the researcher. This has consequences that the author is aware of concerning impartiality and possible bias. Alternatively, those institutions investigated in the UK together with those interviewed, are unknown to the researcher and this may create issues surrounding the findings that should be borne in mind during the process.

An aim in the realist paradigm is for the researcher to be as fully independent and unbiased as possible. The limitations to objectivity posed by the researcher interacting with the phenomenon being explored, coupled with reliance on the nature and quality of the interpretation provided by the researcher, need to be considered within any study. As such, a mixed methods approach to the collection of data and analysis may then be used.

3.1.2 Research Strategy – Studying Cases

This project examines how change management decisions are actually undertaken in an organisational context using UK universities. Approaching from a methodological application Yin (1994) suggests that a case study:

“investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13).

As many change issues are complex, multi-faceted and have many inputs, the style of resolution is contingent upon the specific context (Pettigrew, 1992; Eisenhardt & Zbaracki, 1992; Numagami, 1998). From the perspective of the needs of a problem under research, the method proposed by these authors advocate a deep study of each case in context. Therefore, the nature of change management issues on the subsequent implementation of decision-making processes, coupled with the purpose and nature of case studies can be seen as being appropriate.

By providing and reviewing the existing literature using case studies Eisenhardt (1989b), considers that their use may have various aims: descriptive, theory testing or theory generation. This research project is exploratory as it aims to investigate a particular process within a context and is not entirely sure of the

likely outcomes. Therefore, it is descriptive in nature since it aims to develop descriptions of the context. As Yin (1994) considers, it may also be viewed as explanatory because it aims to explain how certain states have developed.

According to Stake (1994):

“case study is not a methodological choice, but a choice of objects to be studied. We choose to study the case” (p. 236).

He identifies three types of case study: intrinsic, when it is the case that is of particular interest; instrumental, when it is necessary to use the case to investigate or refine a theory, rather than just for the case itself; collective, when instrumental study is pursued in several cases, which may or may not have common characteristics.

In considering the dynamics of examining either single or multiple cases Yin (1994), determines that a single case may be studied because it is the critical one that might prove or disprove a theory; because it is unique or extreme in some way; or just simply for its revelatory value. This rationale is similar to Stake’s (1994) intrinsic cases. When this rationale does not apply then a multiple case study approach is typically employed.

For the purposes of this project the study is considered to be instrumental, because the main objective of the research is connectivity to existing theory contained in the literature review with specific reference to change management. Change management issues and the subsequent decision-making processes in four organisations are studied. The cases being examined are conducted in universities within the UK, which share some characteristics but are different to one another.

3.1.3 Action Research

The application of action research as a methodology to support the project emerges, since, as Frideres (1992) contends, it is a concept of ‘participatory research’ that lends itself to the anticipated outcomes of the project. As proposed by Kemmis & McTaggart (1998), the following definition is generally helpful:

“Action research is a form of collective, self-reflective inquiry that participants in social situations undertake to improve; (1) the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices; (2) the participants’ understanding of these practices and the situations in which they carry out these practices. Groups of participants can be teachers, students, parents, workplace colleagues, social activists or any other community members – that is, any group with a shared concern and the motivation and will to address their shared concern. The approach is action research only when it is collaborative and achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members” (p. 5).

The lineage of action research, however, may well be somewhat clouded. Lewin (1946, 1947) considers that it is a spiral process of planning, developing and implementing strategies, actions and evaluation. This model is broadly supported by McNiff et al., (1996); Earl-Slater (2002); Altricher et al., (2002) and Darwin et al., (2002) who suggest that action research is not only a possible solution for current problems but that it may be used to plan for problems on the horizon.

Both Kemmis (1983) and Hopkins (1993) suggest that action research allows an informal, qualitative, formative, subjective, interpretive, reflective and experimental model in which all the individuals involved in the project are knowing and contributory participants.

Earl-Slater (2002) considers action research in general as a methodology, which jointly processes change and understanding at the same time. He further proposes that action research is a process of cycles (see figure 3.1 on page 68). This model can trace its roots to Lewin’s (1946, 1947) considerations and is similar to the open-ended model proposed by McNiff (2002) and the Investigate, Decide, Enable and Act (IDEA) model suggested by Darwin et al., (2002).

In each cycle Earl-Slater (2002) proposes that there are four stages:

1. Reconnaissance. This is the start of the process and is concerned with understanding the problem and its complexity and is generally exploratory in stance.
2. Plan. Within this stage plans are developed for an intervention strategy.

3. Action. Following discussion and negotiation with the contributory participants the intervention is undertaken.
4. Reflection and revision. A process of evaluating the intervention strategy coupled with a re-evaluation of the initial problem is undertaken.

However, within each stage and especially during and after each intervention observations are made, and information is collected and analysed, in order that a “look, think, act” process emerges. This is an attempt to engender a deeper understanding of the situation and enables participants to:

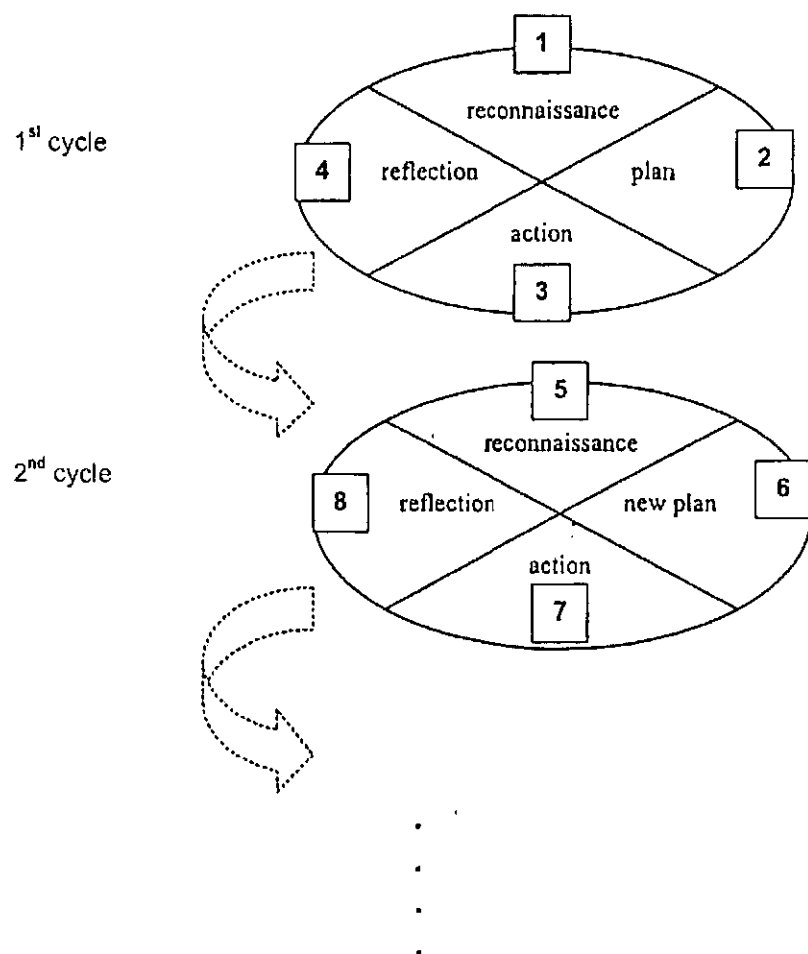
“... think about the contexts we are working in, how they affect our judgements and interpretations on whose judgements are based”
(ibid., p. 13).

The spiral process repeats itself until the desired improvements to practice are achieved (see p. 68).

In general, McNiff (2002); Darwin et al., (2002) and Earl-Slater (2002) consider that action research:

- Is an emergent process that increases understanding of problems and solutions in ‘real-life’ situations;
- Is an iterative process that creates a better understanding of change and where the stock of knowledge is added too;
- Is pragmatic in terms of relying on a rational, reasonable and logical application of research to reality;
- Is participative and since change is normally easier to implement when those involved in each cycle, as contributory participants, become owners of the change;
- Is reflective in that consideration is given to all the evidence from whatever source and then applied to the real-life situation;
- Is evidence based, building on formal research from other studies and the evidence collated from the real world being faced;
- Often blends qualitative and quantitative research and action as no one individual component provides all the answers.

Figure 3.1: An Action Research Spiral



Source: A. Earl-Slater (2002)

Earl-Slater (2002), further considers from his own experience that action research has the power to generate ‘sustained improvements’ because it offers greater feelings of ownership, pragmatic insight into ‘real-life’ issues, opportunities to reflect on and assess work, to test new ideas, methods and materials, provides constructive opportunities for shared feed back and is the basis for formulating and acting on evidence and analysis.

Altricher et al., (2002), however, do consider some limitations concerning action research in that not every change process needs "... to be re-described in the terms put forward by action research" (p. 127). This has also been argued by Kemmis (1996) as being the case since this approach is particular to certain types of problem and cannot be considered a 'panacea' for all social practice issues. Altricher et al., (2002) and Darwin et al., (2002) also consider that action research demands honesty in developing a clear idea of what is being discussed, and as such other approaches to improving social practices must be excluded from a specific discourse. These authors further consider that action research:

"aims to develop practical situations and competencies of participants without substantially pre-describing objectives to be achieved" (Altricher et al., 2002, p. 127).

It is also a problem with action research that it may be the potential incongruity between 'intellectual clarity and developmental orientation'. As such it is essential and important to consider how intellectual clarity can be achieved without effecting the overall developmental orientation that action research aims to promote.

As part of this project is to implement an action learning application, in the case study institution in Cyprus, it is worth considering at this point the relationship between action research and action learning. Cusins (1996) proposes that:

"action learning is a syndrome of four main activities which, when performed effectively, enhance and expand each other to create a context for creative decision making in uncertain situations resulting in the learner feeling more confident of an effective outcome" (p. 19).

He considers these actions as:

- Experiential learning
- Creative problem solving
- Acquisition of relevant knowledge
- Co-learner group support

Each activity is supported and enhanced by each of the others. He further proposes that this form of learning is mainly used in management development

where it could be considered to be a combination of both educational and training methods.

The cycle of action learning by Pedler et al., (1996), supported by Darwin et al., (2002) is similarly based on four experiential and interlinking elements:

1. Experience. Observing and reflecting on the consequences of action in a situation.
2. Understanding. Forming and/or reforming understanding of a situation as a result of experience.
3. Planning. Planning interventions that influence the situation based on the understanding.
4. Action. Implementation of the plan.

The relationship between action research and action learning is rarely discussed. Morgan & Ramirez (1983) link action learning to self-organisation and view action learning as a means to striving toward a democratic, pluralistic, proactive and empowering approach to the solution of problems in real-life situations and is always evolving and open-ended (McNiff, 2002).

McLaughlin & Thorpe (1993) see action learning as a derivation of action research while McGill & Beaty (1995) recognise that they are based on the same learning cycle, but see action research as a method that questions traditional research methodologies. As such they are committed to viewing the action researcher as learning from the investigation in order to make the necessary decisions about change as well as being an active participant within the application and in the investigatory and evolutionary stages. They conclude that the action researcher may use an action learning set to help gain understanding from the action research project, but does not necessarily do so. Nonetheless they see action learning and action research partaking of the same learning cycle and likewise sharing many of the same values. Support for this position is provided by Morgan (1993) who sees:

“action-learning approaches to research ... as a research methodology, ‘action-learning’ is closely linked with what others describe as ‘action research’ and ‘action science’” (pp. 296-297).

Darwin et al., (2002) propose an integrated approach of action learning as a whole systems event and link this to their IDEA concept of action research. Some cautionary thoughts, however, need to be considered. Weisboard & Janoff (1996) identify several issues: action learning cannot compensate for weak leadership; it will not work with sceptics or those concerned with losing control; nor will it reconcile value differences. This is reinforced by Jacobs (1994). In considering real time strategic change, he suggests that the approach would be inappropriate where only incremental change is required or if the organisations’ leaders are not fully committed to creating:

“an empowered, interdependent, organisation-wide team”.

Finally, the process would be pointless and unlikely to succeed if commitment by key stakeholders is not forthcoming or the necessary resources are not made available. These are the real issues that should be addressed if the project is to be implemented in the case study institution, Intercollege. An outcome of the project is the implementation of learning sets across the organisation, based on the evidence gained from the research process in order to address the issues and problems that a change to university status would undoubtedly bring.

3.1.4 Multiple Cases

Replication of logic between multiple cases within a single study is argued by Yin (1994) as being an essential element in case analysis. Each case should be similar to an experiment, and the methodologies used across would also then be similar. According to Yin, the use of multiple case studies enables comparison across cases, thereby improving external validity:

“If two or more cases are shown to support the same theory replication may be claimed. The empirical results may be considered yet more potent if two or more cases support the same theory but do not support an equally plausible *rival* theory” (ibid., p. 31).

The results are not aggregated across the cases, but compared and contrasted. The validity of the findings is further enhanced and supported if the results are consistent across phenomena being studied. According to Numagami (1998), citing Hubbard & Armstrong (1994), it is considered that very few replication studies are actually published in social sciences.

Hubermann & Miles (1994) suggest applying a contingent approach to methodology particularly to instrumentation in cases, and further consider that the degree of formalisation of approach should reflect on the strength of the apriori theory being used. This would appear to suggest that the more exploratory the study, the more flexibility might then be given to the instruments being utilised. They further argue that multiple case studies are iterative in nature. As such the research process employed in this project provides the opportunity to review findings on a continuing basis and this review maintains the following objectives:

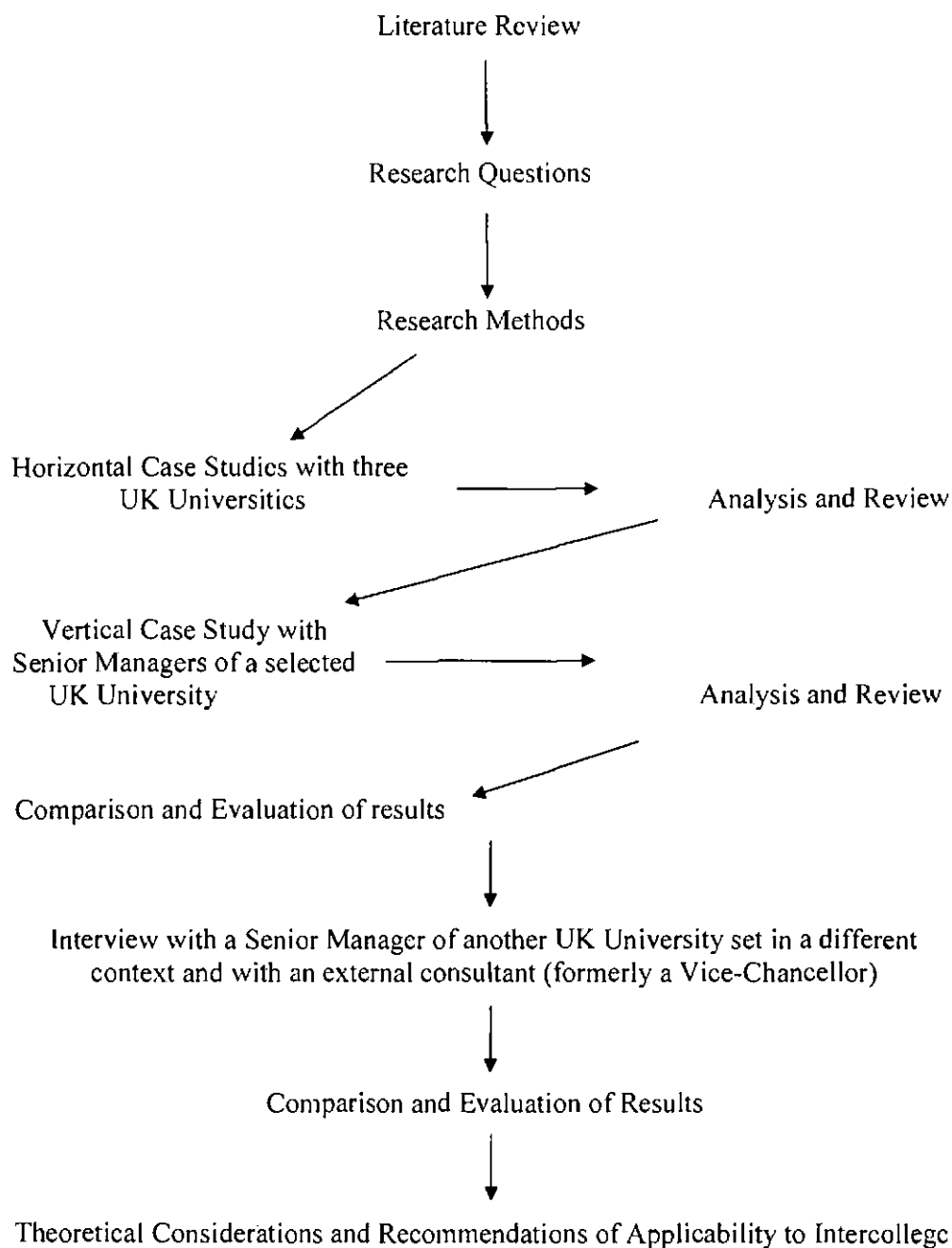
- Within cases: identifying the gaps in the description of each case; identifying further questions for follow-up within the context; identifying concepts that had not been originally or explicitly sought, and then examining them more closely.
- Between cases: altering and improving the data collection techniques and instruments following on from each case; consideration of the emerging themes and duly altering the list of concepts.

Eisenhardt & Schoohoven (1996) advocates this and sees it as being an opportunistic data collection approach as the particular circumstances emerge within the context of study. However, it differs from Yin's (1994) perspective, which argues that multiple cases should follow the same methodological approach in order that a claim for replication may be made. Although Yin, does consider that one or a number of case studies may be undertaken so as to refine the instruments and the way in which the study is conducted.

Multiple data gathering approaches and the ability to work opportunistically within the case by using additional data gathering approaches, such as observation when feasible, was employed by Eisenhardt & Bourgeois (1988); Bourgeois &

Eisenhardt (1998) and Eisenhardt & Brown (1998). The objective of multi-case research in this project is to gather cases of the same phenomenon – change management – and determine whether the outcomes from the studies might have the ability to be replicated in a very different context, in Cyprus.

Four organisations were studied incorporating eight interviews with senior managers which were conducted over a six-month period in the UK, following Hubermann & Miles's (1994) suggestions. Given that this study had previous exploratory objective data available from the first study, the data was analysed and based on this experience, some changes to the methodology were implemented prior to subsequent studies being undertaken. Following the analysis of the data a cross-case analysis compared and contrasted the findings between the cases and linked them back to the literature findings. The research process advanced as follows:



As a control mechanism to ensure reliability from the results gained from the cluster of three universities in the northwest of England, a fourth institution was selected in the south of England and an interview with the vice-chancellor was undertaken. Furthermore, an interview was conducted with a former vice-chancellor of a college of the University of Oxford to seek an impartial view and again to act as a control mechanism so that the results had validity.

3.1.5 Units of Analysis

Yin (1994) and Eisenhardt & Schoohoven (1996) recommend careful consideration and identification of the unit of analysis being used. The importance of this is to ensure that in the contextually embedded study of cases, data collection and analysis are used to focus on examining the same thing. Eisenhardt (1989b) uses: top management team; strategic direction and company performance as the units of analysis. The difficulties in identifying those who comprise the top team have been recognised by Smith et al., (1994) who overcame the problem by asking the chief executive to nominate who was in this team. The same approach is taken in this project within the university environment where major decisions affect a large number of stakeholders. Strategic decisions measured in the second unit of analysis are considered by Eisenhardt (1989a) in her work, and she chooses strategic decisions which:

“(1) involve strategic positioning, (2) have high stakes, (3) involve many of the firms functions, and (4) [can] be considered representative of the process by which major decisions are made at the firm” (p. 546).

The same approach is embraced here, but as already noted firm performance is unlikely to be measured readily in universities and this unit of analysis is not, therefore, used.

Change management processes are examined in four universities. To undertake more might threaten the validity of the evaluations due to the overwhelming volume of data gathered. One purpose of the research is to contribute to the validation of existing propositions, together with providing insight into a different context, Cyprus. A small study may produce this. Eisenhardt (1989b) and Yin (1994) argue that:

“analytic generalization can be used whether your case study involves one or several cases” (Yin, 1994, p. 31).

In addition, although the number of cases to be researched is small, the examination of more than one case will improve internal validity.

3.1.6 Case Selection

As previously considered, the universities in the UK have generally been subject to high levels of change in recent years and change appears, more than ever before, to be permanently on the agenda for this group of institutions. The complex environment is largely public sector and highly regulated. This group operates within a different national culture and is largely people and services based, and as such the group can be said to be substantially different from commercial companies.

There are 116 UK (12.01.2006) institutions with university status, however, there are provincial variations in regulatory structures and this research will concentrate on English universities within three conurbations to ensure that the national policy issues and factors affecting the group are common. Similarly, the project will consider those institutions offering services across a wide range of subject areas, rather than the smaller more focused institutions, that operate within the same funding and regulatory pool. With this in mind it was decided to select three institutions that, a) share a similar background of missions to disseminate knowledge through teaching, b) are more vocationally orientated in choice of provision, and c) have similar resource endowments at the time of change. One large teaching and research institution was chosen in Manchester due to its recent merger and consequent change management issues, coupled with its considerable environmental affects on the two other northwest organisations to be studied.

The institutions selected in the northwest of England were considered to be good benchmark cases because each had undergone significant and different change management processes and emerged as successful institutions of higher education. It was felt that pursuing a study of these seats of learning would provide a sound basis for developing a model that could be applied to Intercollege in Cyprus.

This case has relevance to the study in Cyprus in that it operates within a small yet similarly complex and highly competitive environment, and although predominantly vocationally orientated in seeking university status, it is likely to be required to develop applied research capabilities.

Stake (1994), with regard to the selection of cases, suggests that:

“by sampling of attributes should not be the highest priority. Balance and variety are important; opportunity to learn is of primary importance” (p. 244).

Similarly Yin (1994), suggests:

“individual cases are not ‘sampling units’ and should not be chosen for this reason. Rather, individual case studies are to be selected as a laboratory investigator selects the topic of a new experiment” (p. 34).

The selection of universities chosen for this project reflects this approach. All are located in cities within the UK and face different local challenges, different competitive challenges and differing challenges in relation to major investments.

While the need for balance, diversity and learning opportunities are important considerations, difficulties of access meant that an opportunistic approach to selecting the cases had also to be taken. Since the researcher lived outside of the UK the research was carried out when he and the individuals within the institutions were available, and contacts within the universities contributed to the choice.

CHAPTER 4

Data Presentation

4.1 Ethics

The main ethical issues to bear in mind were the need to secure that consent to participate was obtained together with preserving anonymity so that those interviewed would emerge from the experience unharmed. It was essential to ensure that the benefits of the study, in terms of generalised knowledge, were balanced against all possible risks. It was, therefore necessary to reflect on how the interviewees were likely to experience the event, especially in regard to the role of an insider researcher, particularly with those interviewed at Intercollege. Careful consideration was given as to how the interviews would be conducted and although there might be an element of risk-taking when pursuing research, an attempt was made to mitigate this beforehand by being an impartial observer and recording the issues as they arose in order to minimise any bias in the outcomes. As an insider researcher the author believed it was paramount to consider whether he had the right to ask people to change. This was examined again carefully and the conclusion was drawn that the researcher – having experienced previous complex change situations in which leadership skills had to be employed, and as a result of the research in this project – did have the right to action change, providing the authority was granted from the senior managers of the institution.

During the research for the project the following aspects of ethics were observed:

Informed Consent: The individuals were asked whether they wished to participate, or otherwise, in the research activity after being informed of its objectives which might influence their decision.

Access and Acceptance: The author felt that he presented himself as a serious researcher and established the fact that essentially he was an insider researcher with regard to the project. Permission to meet the interviewees was sought at an early stage in the project's timetable, especially for those employed in the UK due to the author working and living in Cyprus.

Anonymity: Confidentiality was granted to all those involved in the research, and an opportunity was afforded to participants to verify statements and to receive a final copy of the research data – all declined. If publication was pursued at a later date then participants were informed that permission would be requested.

Effects on Participants: The author had the utmost respect for the views and comments given by participants.

Betrayal: As an insider researcher, in action research, interaction with colleagues on a daily basis is essential. It may then be vulnerable to inadvertently include comments and/or views without the participants' permission. The author is confident that this did not occur in conducting the research for this project.

4.2 Data Collection

Eisenhardt (1989a); Yin (1994) and Stake (1994), identify that case studies can be investigated in many ways, including the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. For instance the methodology reported by Eisenhardt & Bourgeois (1988); Eisenhardt (1989a) and Bourgeois & Eisenhardt (1998), uses interviews, archived material, direct observation and qualitatively based questions.

The initial visits in this project were arranged with two universities in the large city of Manchester, situated in the northwest of England. The two institutions studied are separated in reality by less than one kilometre. The first is predominately a research institution which recently re-merged with an institute of science and technology to make it one of the largest tertiary institutions in the UK both in terms of income and student numbers.

The second is a former polytechnic with significant teaching resources and is more vocationally based due to its historical origins and development. It has considerably less research funding but enjoys contacts in the local business community.

An introductory contact was made with each institution. It included open-ended interview questions which were sent to the Vice-Chancellors plus notes of guidance as to the structure of the proposed line of questioning. The Vice-Chancellor of the first institution delegated the interview to a senior manager, a

dean of school, who had been actively involved at the highest level with the recent merging of the two institutions and was still managing the change process across the organisation. The interview was taped and backup notes were taken, which was fortunate since the tape recording malfunctioned. The notes were transcribed into Word format for subsequent analysis using the NUD*IST software package. The interview took place in July 2005.

The second interview, also undertaken in July 2005, was with a Vice-Chancellor who had been at the institution in various senior management positions for a considerable number of years. She had been active in the change process from a higher education college to polytechnic status and subsequently to becoming a university. This interview was taped and subsequently transcribed into Word format for analysis using the NUD*IST software package.

In effect both of these interviews utilised a 'horizontal' research process with experienced change managers at senior levels within the organisations and these interviews informed the questionnaire for the third interview.

The third interview, again undertaken in July 2005, was arranged with a Vice-Chancellor of a newly designated university in the northwest of England. A number of open-ended questions were presented to him in a formal interview. This was not taped due to the environmental conditions where the discussion took place. Notes were, however, taken and the Vice-Chancellor provided copious amounts of printed material to support his answers. At the meeting it was considered how the 'new' university status (formerly a university college) would affect the institution, in terms of management, market and faculty and staff aspirations.

It was during this meeting that the suggestion was made to undertake a more in-depth vertical case study with members of the senior management team who had been actively involved in the submission for university status, and who were now responsible for implementing the changes across the university teams. The Vice-Chancellor agreed to this and subsequent arrangements were made for such

interviews to take place in September 2005. Subsequently the notes were transcribed into Word format for analysis using the NUD*IST software package.

In September of 2005 the more in-depth 'vertical' research process was undertaken with three senior managers of the newly formed university. All three managers – a Pro-Vice-Chancellor, a Dean of School and a Dean of Quality – were members of the senior management team and all actively involved in implementing change across the institution from different perspectives. The earlier July interviews were used to inform the open-ended questionnaire which essentially posed the same questions but with different emphasis by the researcher in order to determine the major change issues that were facing the organisation now that it had gained its new status. All of the interviews were taped and subsequently transcribed into Word format for analysis using the NUD*IST software package.

A fourth interview took place in September 2005 with a Vice-Chancellor of a former university college that had since gained university status in the south of England. This institution was situated within a large conurbation, which had similar external environmental pressures to those in the northwest. The interview was undertaken in order to consolidate some of the issues raised in the previous studies and to determine whether the findings in the northwest could be generalised to other institutions in the sector in another part of the country. Due to environmental considerations relating to where the interview was held, the interview was not taped but notes were taken and the Vice-Chancellor forwarded further information to the researcher to support his claims. As in the previous interviews the notes were transcribed into Word format and the NUD*IST software package used for the analysis.

A further interview took place in July 2005 with a former Vice-Chancellor of one of the Oxford University colleges and a former President of several American universities who had authored a book on university status. This meeting was held to clarify the changes facing UK institutions and how affected by external stakeholder influences they were, especially with regard to government policies and how the internal environment might react to such changes being imposed

upon them. Similarly the information gained was used to inform the questionnaire process for the 'vertical' research process in reforming the questions to elicit the responses that brought the external environment into consideration. The interview was taped and transcribed in the same manner as those described above.

Throughout the interview process all participants were advised of the confidentiality factor and asked if they would like to review the notes and/or transcriptions – all refused.

The relevance of this approach to the case study, Intercollege, is that within its own context the problems currently being faced in terms of gaining university status as well as the subsequent change management issues that may be encountered, are likely to be similar in nature to those of the UK organisations studied.

4.3 Triangulation

One means of overcoming problems of validity in qualitative research is the careful structuring and iteration of information gathering. Triangulation is the:

“combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon” (Denzin, 1970, p. 297).

Triangulated data collected from various sources and gathered through diverse methods is the key (Yin, 1994; Hubermann & Miles, 1994) to establishing the validity of research findings. Patton (1987) identifies four distinct types of triangulation:

1. Triangulation of theories in which a theory is taken from one discipline and used to explain phenomenon in another. In this project, the general arena of decision-making in institutions remains the same.
2. Investigator triangulation, in which different researchers collect and compare evidence concerning the same subject. The investigator is working individually on this project. The main vehicle for gathering data is by conducting interviews, and all bar two have been recorded thus ensuring accuracy. Some data sources being used, for instance archived

material and published studies of other organisations, were collated or written by other researchers.

3. Methodological triangulation, in which two or more research approaches to a single problem are used. This project uses a similar methodology in the institutions being investigated. However, the specific data collection methods themselves are mixed: data is gathered through interviews, and qualitative questionnaires enabling the issues being studied to be described in different ways. The findings from one type of data are combined with the findings from another in order to build a more robust analysis.
4. Data triangulation or triangulation within methods, in which the same research approach is used with different data sources in order to capture different viewpoints and perspectives on the same phenomenon. In this current study several respondents were interviewed in order to develop a fuller picture of phenomena being studied in change management. The examination of different cases in the study improves the validity of the findings.

Whilst it is important for establishing the credibility of qualitative data, triangulation is also a norm in the study of cases in business (Numagami, 1998; Brown & Eisenhardt, 1998). Business situations are typically multifaceted, involving a variety of inputs, processes, people and organisations. Triangulation facilitates the development of a rich picture of the phenomenon under study. Archived material and interviews with participants in the change making process were all used in the project resulting in both methodological and data triangulation.

As much of the information gathered in the project was qualitative and, therefore, couched in the code of language rather than the more compact code of numbers, there is a danger of gathering more data than can reasonably be analysed (Hubermann & Miles, 1994). Structure and planning is, therefore, important and it was deemed wise to start with a modest proposal, which could be extended if circumstances permitted and/or required it.

4.4 Interviews

A major part of the data collection was conducted via eight interviews with vice-chancellors, members of the senior management teams and external advisors. Interviews may take various forms with key differentiating factors being the number of people involved, groups or individuals, how the communication takes place – for instance face to face, by telephone or over the web, – the degree of structure of the interview and location of the interview, in the research context or elsewhere (Collis & Hussey, 2003; Alvesson, 2003).

The outline of the interviews is contained in appendix I. Following other authors (Eisenhardt, 1989b and Smith et al., 1994), these interviews were important in establishing the path of the subsequent research process. They sought general information about the organisation and its competitive environment, requested examples of recent change issues, established the relationship of top management teams and sought entry to the team members. After each interview the researcher paused and evaluated what had been said, summarising some of the key issues. A plan for accessing the remaining interviewees was established at this point.

Following this model the remaining interviews were all semi-structured and contained the following:

1. Questions concerning the competitive position of the institution and its business environment. This sought the perceptions of each individual regarding the strategies of the institution in general and those of the particular function in depth.
2. Questions about the management team. These sought the perceptions of both the decision-making group and of the individuals within it, inviting respondents to describe colleagues in whatever terms came to mind.
3. Questions relating to the process of making change management decisions, and requesting the specifics of what happened.

These interviews were undertaken within the institutional context and externally dependent on the availability of the interviewees and were generally conducted within a day.

Various authors, for instance Miles & Hubermann (1984) and Yin (1992), comment on the substantial loss of valuable information incurred in note-taking from interviews. In the research all but two interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim to manage this problem. All interviewees were offered the opportunity to check and amend the transcripts; they all declined.

Miles & Hubermann (1994), identify the importance of the skills of the researcher suggesting that a

“knowledgeable practitioner with conceptual interests and more than one disciplinary perspective” (p. 38).

may be a good instrument of data collection and analysis. Quality in this study comes from the refinement drawn from experience, the ability of being able to identify core processes quickly and greater openness to meaning. In the case of the current research, the fact that the researcher works within the context and is familiar with both the context and the conceptual area of strategic decisions and change management would seem to be positive attributes.

4.5 Secondary and Archival Data

Public information about the institutions: student numbers; mission statements; organisational structures for instance was sourced from the organisations’ websites and prospectuses. Published government sources provided further information about the environment of UK institutions. Finally newspapers including the *Economist* and *The Higher* were sources of information covering the status of universities in the UK. All the above information served to triangulate the accuracy and completeness of information and to create a rich picture of the business environment and of particular universities.

4.6 Data Analysis

The initial analysis of the business environment was conducted before the main interviews began. This was updated subsequently as new information became available. A content analysis of *The Higher*, the UK’s weekly trade paper for higher education was undertaken in order to establish the types of strategic decisions being made by universities in the UK. This analysis examined the news

section of the publication, where news from UK institutions is reported, across ten consecutive issues. A list of strategic events or announcements made by the universities was made and these were categorised by type of content.

Hussey & Hussey (1998) suggest that the main challenge towards ensuring that qualitative research is rigorous and accessible is the lack of widely agreed convention to guide analysis. However, Miles & Hubermann (1994) offer a “general analytical procedure” which can be applied to any written qualitative data. This is a staged approach, which advocates systematically disaggregating and re-aggregating data into themes or categories through coding. Codes represent themes or concepts and coding systems are developed either prior to, or during, data collection and analysis. Apriori codes may be drawn from or reflect research propositions being investigated; codes developed in the course of the research are built from the data. Miles & Hubermann suggest that a balance needs to be found between the use of a ridged set of codes and working:

“more inductively by waiting for the field notes to suggest more empirically driven labels” (Miles & Hubermann, 1994, p. 65).

However, they also stress that the researcher:

“should not, however, wait too long, or move capriciously from one coding scheme to another” (ibid.).

Eisenhardt (1989b); Miles & Hubermann (1994) and Yin (1994), all encourage the use of propositions and, therefore, coding systems derived from them, to aid analysis where possible. However, they all recognise too that researchers need to remain open to the possibility that these codes may be inadequate in some way. In particular there is a risk that this approach may result in bias, as the researcher looks for the pre-defined concepts only, forcing the data to fit a pre-determined scheme.

This project follows the general approach to coding advocated by Miles & Hubermann (1994) for the interview material. The transcripts were held in Word files and in print form. The use of computer analysis, CAQDAS (Computer

Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) is an acronym for a group of software products which have been developed over the past twenty years to help in the analysis of qualitative data (Catterall & Maclaran, 1998). One such package NUD*IST (Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorising) was employed in this project. NUD*IST has two main elements: a documentary and index search system which the publishers claim assists not only with the management and indexation of text-based documents but also in the building of the theory through testing linkages in the data.

There is, however, evidence (Prothero, 1996; Stokes, 1999), that these tools present additional problems for researchers. Firstly, for a relatively small number of interviews the set-up costs in terms of time are regarded to be high. Secondly, the software package tends to create a distance between the researcher and the data (Prothero, 1996) by removing quoting text units out of their context. This de-contextualisation works against some of the objectives of qualitative research in general, and of contextualised case studies in particular. However, after considering these limitations it was deemed appropriate to use this method of data analysis in this project.

The first interview in each case with the Vice-Chancellor was particularly important. After each of these the researcher paused and summarised some of the issues that seemed to be important initially (Miles & Hubermann, 1994). For instance, a) who were the members of the top management team involved in the change process, b) what seemed to be the time line in making decisions, c) what was voiced that seemed in line with, or in conflict with, the actual actions, and d) what other issues of importance to the institution had the interview identified? It was at this point that the questions for a particular institution could be finalised and when the plan for further access to the institution could be made.

As the researcher collected the data and analysed it he looked for emerging themes and recurrent events, categorising them and revaluating the themes and categories. In addition, supplementary analytical notes were written about the data as further information was collected, and previous theories were revaluated as the old data was compared with the new (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

It was important to remain open to the possibility that the coding system would not explain or effectively describe the activities in the organisation. The validity of the coding system was checked in several ways. First, the staged case study analysis allowed reflection on the adequacy of the initial system. The multi-case approach facilitated an opportunity to improve the instruments in the light of findings, which were outside the initial conceptual problem. In addition, the codes were supplemented by marginal notes identifying concepts and contextual issues which might not be picked up by the codes.

As a further means of ensuring the validity of the coding, a critical friend, experienced in qualitative research, and knowledgeable in the strategy field, examined a selection of the coded transcripts. The objective here was to establish that a different researcher, examining the same data, would attribute codings in the same way. The colleague looked for consistent application of the coding system; for the relevance of the coding system to the materials, and for any conceptual areas which seemed to be addressed in the transcripts without being captured by the codes or marginal notes. The conclusion was reached that, providing triangulation between respondents and between data types was undertaken, the coding would be robust.

Thus, all the interviews for each institution were completed and transcribed, and the analysis of the interview material was finalised in stages: in the first instance the material was read meticulously in order to become familiar with the content, and some marginal notes were made at this point. Secondly, the time line for the decision was established following the first reading and then checked against the documentary evidence; thirdly, each interview transcript was re-read and coded using NUD*IST, and finally marginal notes in addition to the coding were added as the coding progressed.

This programme enabled the identification of text segments and resulted in fifty-eight data codes. A few of these original codes survived the ongoing revisions and the collapsing of categories prior to final analysis. The researcher printed out

categories in groups and coded them again by hand, testing new coding categories by merging several and reevaluating the data.

CHAPTER 5

Research Outcomes

5.1 UK Outcomes

The outcomes from the interviews in the UK revealed some predictable and some surprising results. The information that emerged, as may be expected in a sector complicated and fraught with the danger of misinterpretation and miscommunication, were open to question as to whether the interviewees were actually being completely honest in their recollection of the many issues they have had to face in managing change in higher education.

It would seem that those universities created after 1992 have been more flexible in their approach to change and have been quicker to react to the changing needs and demands of the external environment. However, the institutions that have recently gained university status may be more vulnerable to the external environment and the aggressive nature of their competitors who already have a status and reputation, unless they are able to differentiate themselves in some way. And those universities with their roots firmly established prior to 1992 believe that their status and reputation have elevated their place in the hierarchy with regard to choice of students. Yet these same institutions are now having to alter their attitude to improve their managerial skills in order to comply with external pressures, and in a perverse way it is perhaps more difficult for them to achieve change due to their entrenched culture, values and belief systems.

“... [there has been] devolvement of power and responsibility but there is still a reluctance to take this on ...”

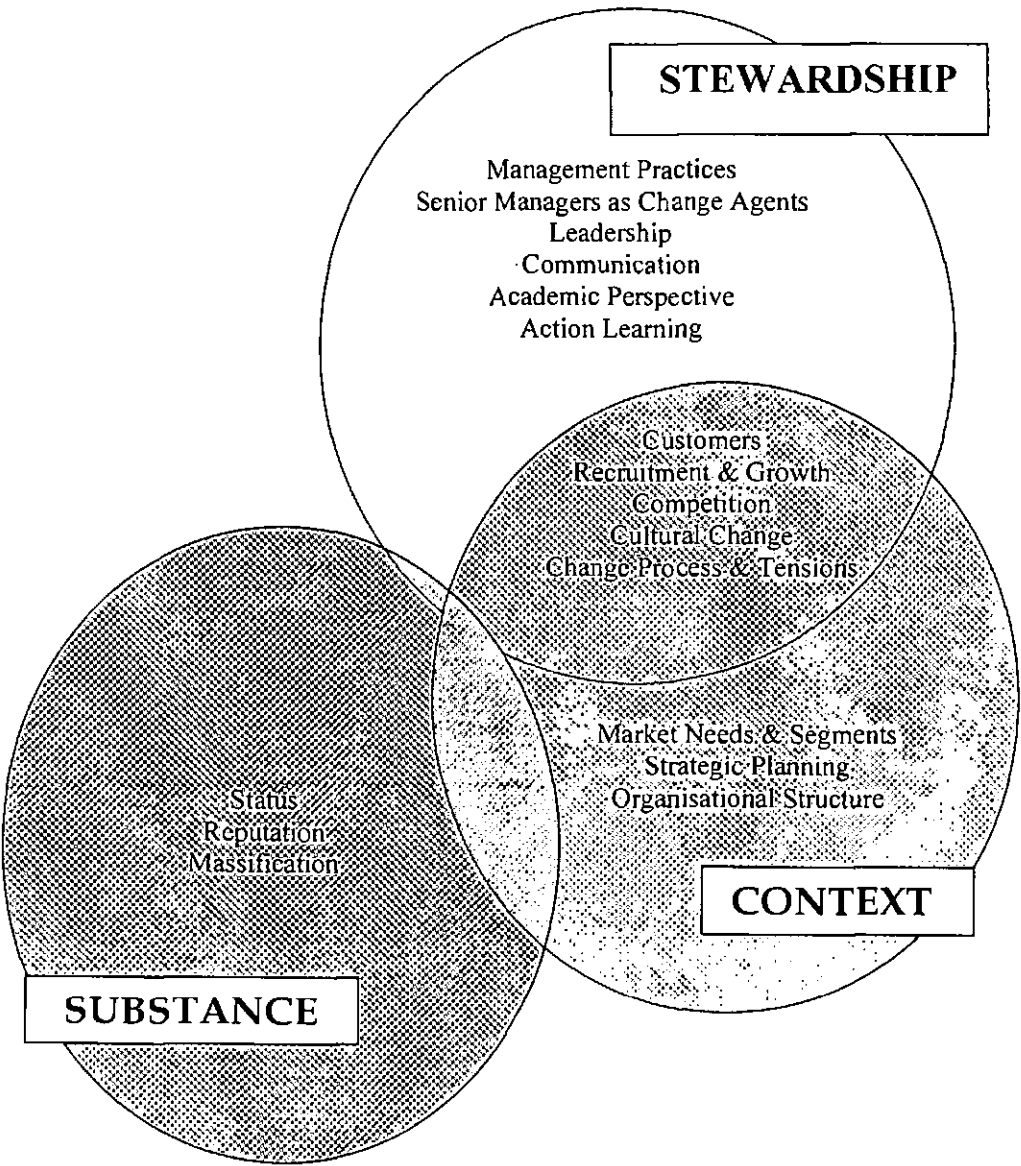
University C Interview 1

“The devolvement of power does allow the university to respond to quality but there is reluctance on the part of some academics to embrace this due to the environment in which the university has operated in the past.”

University C Interview 1

Figure 5.1 below pinpoints the main and sub-themes emerging from the research and identifies them across the range of institutions examined. In many ways the themes surface in a similar fashion but they also appear differently, dependent upon the environment in which the institution operates or the way in which it perceives its role in society.

Figure 5.1: Emerging Main Themes and Sub-Themes



There were major issues relating to the type and size of the institutions; for instance the major research organisations generally had a different agenda to post-1992 and new universities. The pre-1992 institutions perceived their role differently in the sense that it was expected that they might recruit the more able students. This in turn transmuted the ability to attract a more 'able' staff with the necessary research skills. Whereas the size of the institution, both in number and budget terms meant that managing the change process would appear more difficult and additional effort would be required to convince staff that change was actually needed, those institutions who had to compete for market share may already have the change processes in place which could enable them to be more flexible and attuned to the external environment. In effect the latter had bridges in place to span the three main themes shown in figure 5.1 (p. 91) without creating too many barriers within the change process.

From the author's perspective there seems to have been a move in the UK, since the early 1990s to impose on higher education a more business orientated culture. This has been generated, not only by government in its bid to improve efficiency in the sector, but also by the taxpayer who wishes to see increased effectiveness in the area in the form of educating more individuals from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds who will be able to make a positive contribution to society. There are also the employers who, from the author's own experience, constantly claim that an 'educated workforce' is required and bemoan the fact that the educational system fails to deliver on its promises. Yet the technological pressures which many currently face when entering the system may be quite different when they eventually graduate and many business people are unsure of what this actually means.

When the interview data were submitted to computer analysis using NUD*IST, a pattern of nodes emerged which appeared to relate to several principal groupings of: context, substance and stewardship of change. Context – adapted from Pettigrew's (1985) work – refers to the internal and external environments and, therefore, is the operational environment of the institution as it evolves temporally. The substance of change refers to what changes were made, whether to the organisation's size or the way its activities were conducted, and also

includes the size or scale of change. Stewardship (Donaldson & Davies, 1991; Davies et al., 2001) refers to facilitating the implementation of change, its leadership and an assessment of its progress and effects.

When events reoccurred at least three times during interviews with individual interviewees from within the same institution or with three individual interviewees from different institutions they were considered to be a possible theme. The implication was that some measure of significance was placed on the issue in the minds of the senior managers being interviewed. The often repeated issues raised were subsequently aggregated into strong themes or sub-themes which revealed a link to the main theme but were less frequently discussed, or were mentioned using different terminology.

The main themes have been categorised under the headings in figure 5.1 (p. 91), and are explained below in order to provide some order to the issues raised, together with the effect and impact that each theme has on the management of change in the organisation:

Substance:

Status is concerned with how the internal and external stakeholders viewed the institution with respect to its position in the environment with particular emphasis on the title university and how long it had been established.

Reputation, although closely linked to status, it may at times be used interchangeably, but in this project it relates to the recognition of academic activity by various external stakeholders.

Massification is the demand placed on the sector by government to increase the number of students in higher education to 50 per cent.

Context:

Market Needs and Segments. The attempt to anticipate what the demands are likely to be in the future for graduates on completion of their studies, together with the aim of institutions identifying niche markets that may be under-represented in the sector and might well allow them to grow and be able to meet their target numbers.

Strategic Planning is a logical and developed plan of action that holds credibility to those who must implement it and is the basis for the change programme.

Organisational Structure is the way in which the institution is configured from a managerial perspective.

Stewardship:

Management Practices. The necessity for managers to engage fully with faculty and staff in order to gain commitment to the change process.

Senior Managers as Change Agents refers to those who have been allocated the role and responsibilities for implementation of the change programme.

Leadership defines those managers who are acting as change agents, are designated to implement the plan, and who are committed to guide others to the new desired position.

Communication is the ability of the leaders to transfer the message of change.

Academic Perspective. The way in which academics view the institution and perceive their professional freedom.

Action Learning is the method by which the leadership development programme is undertaken and is a result of action research techniques.

The Overlap:

Customers are viewed by the universities to be all of those stakeholders who may wish to use the university, for example, as students, consultants or various organisations for research purposes.

Recruitment and Growth is linked to massification and is concerned with meeting targets and increasing the number of students in the sector.

Competition. Individual universities used in the case study completed an analysis of what others were doing in the sector and linked this back to status and market needs.

Cultural Change is an important aspect of the change process and is concerned with moving the institution's values and belief systems towards creating a desire to change the way people may behave within the organisation.

Change Process and Tensions is the enactment of change through the improvement of organisational performance, and the possible anxiety that may occur in the implementation of the change process.

5.2 Substance

The external influences impacting on a complex institution such as a university do mean that senior managers have to make some key decisions in order to enact change. As such, a university may be considered to be interacting in an open systems organisational model in which the external environmental events, issues and forces cannot be viewed independently but as interrelated elements in the complex entity. This links back to the literature review and the research of Davies & Ellison (1997) who suggest that the external environment does have an important impact on the change process.

Across the institutions researched there were arguments that the external environment did form an essential ingredient in guiding change:

“... there has been a massive change in policy and processes, and the environment in which universities operate ... and I do think that they are very particular about change and change management.”

University A Interview 1

“The merger was a response to the pressures of the external environment and how both institutions could benefit from this.”

University C Interview 1

“I am concerned about the constant incessant [government] policy making concerning the sector.”

University E Interview 1

“... we are driven by market economics and government policy which has intended to instrumentalise education.”

University D Interview 2

“... our funding is dependent on the effective implementation of a [market force] policy directed by external stakeholders.”

University D Interview 2

5.2.1 Status of the Institution

This was seen as an important element in those newly created universities in 2005 in ensuring that ‘customers’, i.e. prospective students; parents/guardians; employers would envisage the institution as having a certain place in society, and

that those working in the institution viewed the status as essential in maintaining market position.

The post-1992 institutions have had considerable experience in changing their status as many have been former colleges of further and higher education before becoming polytechnics. Their status rests mainly with the local community and considerable effort was placed in building those links and sustaining relationships with business. Today they operate in the same competitive market as those organisations which boast a status that in some cases has been generated over centuries.

Those institutions formed prior to 1992 had a status grounded in history and possess a more entrenched research culture which enables them to build on this status in both recruitment of staff and faculty.

“... there was a perception, however vague that hanging on to college of HE status would relegate us in the marketplace.”

University D Interview 4

“... everybody wanted to be a university.”

University D Interview 4

Similarly, if an institution was to survive in the highly competitive environment of higher education provision, it was necessary to acquire the perceived enhanced status that:

“The consequences were that the status was necessary if the organisation was to compete in its environment, and the enhanced status meant that people had to adapt to that status.”

University E Interview 1

“... if we had our own degree awarding powers we could call ourselves University ... there was a sort of fear factor ... which drove people on as a sort of incentive to have taught degree awarding powers ...”

University D Interview 4

5.2.2 Reputation of the Institution

Coupled closely to status is reputation which presents itself much more closely with the demands and needs of various stakeholder groups and is concerned with the general position that the university seeks:

“... British higher education is organised along status lines and the image and reputation standing of the university sector is very important in attracting students ...”

University D Interview 2

“What we are trying to do is build a reputation to meet the demands of the customer and provide an exceptionally high quality of service.”

University D Interview 1

To one of developing a certain strategy or niche:

“However, in HE a major aspect that students consider together with all the other stakeholders is concerned with reputation and prestige which are key issues in understanding our position and strategy.”

University E Interview 1

“... it has built a reputation for certain areas of academic activity.”

University D Interview 2

And, still further the institution may consider its relationship with a particular stakeholder group, such as employers:

“... we do have greater links, affinity and reputation with the professions ... we do so much more ‘hands on’ much more linked to the world of work.”

University A Interview 1

5.2.3 Massification

The concept of massification imposed by government targets has brought pressures to bear on senior managers and affected the way they manage:

“I am concerned about the almost incessant policy making concerning the sector ... we are trying to achieve targets set for massification ... to protect teaching funding ...”

University E Interview 1

“Now I think they will be under more pressure to deliver [targets].”

University D Interview 4

“... better value for money and seeking to strip the amount of state contribution to HE and, therefore, what you have to have had over the years is students numbers going up but actual cash going down ...”

University A Interview 1

This has consequently meant that the student body has changed which in turn influences managers in how and who they recruit in order that targets, budgets and ultimately funding is achieved:

“The striving towards 50% participation rates has changed the very nature of the work, changed the nature of the view of students coming into the system ...”

University D Interview 2

“Basically, there is a view which is widely held over the last seven to eight years looking at increased participation, ... [that] what we have actually been doing is taking more of the less able middle class who can afford to come in to HE and can afford the debt when they emerge at the end.”

University D Interview 2

“... those studying straight literature are declining, also the students coming in didn't come [in] to it with enthusiasm as they used too, and part of it is to do with the whole culture and massification of education, they are coming here because they want a job and a qualification.”

University D Interview 3

5.3 Context

It was no real surprise to find that, driven by external environmental pressures the universities researched had changed emphasis over the years and had adopted a more entrepreneurial outlook and business culture. From the late 1980s when the polytechnics were no longer confined to local authority control and were eventually designated university status – and in the words of the former head of the HEFC Sir Bill Stubbs, now had the “freedom to go bust” – the control and subsequent reporting methodology to the HEFC prompted senior management teams to examine the vision and purpose of the university and in general make them more reactive to external pressures.

From the research the universities recognised that they needed to respond to demands of government, industry and societal groups, whilst at the same time maintaining and refining their traditional role of teaching, research and student learning as this was becoming more complicated due to the rapid changes occurring within the environment. It meant that in order to survive, despite old traditions or individual characters which had coloured their past, they would need to adopt a more flexible and adaptable position.

It was noted that higher education is in a complex change environment:

“Educational change is complex, more so than business change, and requires a greater number of managerial skills than possibly in business due to the diversity of the organisation and the variety and power of stakeholders.”

University C Interview 1

“One of the issues is knowing how and where the decisions are being made ... I think if you look in a commercial set up it is usually pretty clear who has the responsibility. Whereas in a university it can be a very diverse organisation pulling in all directions, and if you look at the academic staff, their allegiance to their school and their discipline is a factor that does not have any parallels in any other institution.”

University D Interview 3

Higher education, it would appear, is influenced just like any other business by the market supply and demand mechanisms.

Problems were revealed in the data that may contribute to staff morale issues and low support for some changes. An example might be under-recruitment. It could lead to budgetary constraints, which would mean less money to spend on recruitment and retention during the following year. From the author's view this is a classical 'death spiral' concept that is directly related to business practices.

“... they [government] require universities to be much more business like.”

University A Interview I

“... better value for money ... so what you have over the years is student numbers going up but actual ‘cash’ going down.”

University A Interview 1

“The vice-chancellor acts more like a CEO ...”

University C Interview 1

Although senior managers do recognise the necessity to operate in a more business like manner there is the recognition that faculty do have an important role to play in the organisation:

“I make a real distinction of what the university must be like business wise in that it must be well managed and have real value for money. On the other hand I do not try and teach academics how they should run their programmes.”

University A Interview 1

In one case there was still the view that in comparison to the private university sector, especially in the USA, that universities in the UK are poorly managed to a large extent:

“I think universities are incredibly badly run ...”

University B Interview 1

5.3.1 Market Needs and Segments

In considering themselves reasonably successful, the institutions under investigation indicated clearly that, in practical terms, it was essential to review the market place and compare themselves in order to strengthen their market position:

“So you need to look at solid [market] evidence ... what are the perceptions of your strengths as opposed to somebody else.”

University A Interview 1

“... it [university] has always been market orientated ... it has been particularly conscious of its place in the market and how it needs to secure student numbers in order to make a more secure and stable future.”

University D Interview 2

“... if [university] is going to compete in the world as an international university it’s got to have some hard decision making.”

University B Interview 1

What came across in the interviews was the aggressive stance that the universities had adopted in order to ensure that the market was researched and they were in a position to capitalise on any gaps that had not effectively been catered for by their competitors:

“... people have worked extremely hard ... to make sure that our applications have been strong and we have been capturing markets that have not traditionally been part of the old polytechnic sector.”

University D Interview 2

“I think it is a combination of astute reading of the kind of market potential and where the gaps are but also recognising that we are in a very fortunate position ...”

University D Interview 3

“... we do pay very close attention to the market.”

University D Interview 2

“I mean it’s all about market forces and that is it.”

University D Interview 2

“... people have worked extremely hard in that direction [market segments] to make sure that our applications have been strong and have been capturing markets ... we do pay very close attention to market.”

University D Interview 1

Senior managers also emphasised the importance that all within the institution had a responsibility to reflect on the market opportunities and bring them to the notice of senior managers:

“... they [academics] are closer to their marketplace than I am ... so it is important we engage fully with the staff at all levels to make sure that the portfolio of the organisation keeps moving on.”

University D Interview 2

In considering the market position there was a relationship to the status of the institution and the notion that to be considered in a ‘lower league’ would have a

significant effect on recruitment and ultimately the ability for the organisation to survive:

“... there was a perception, however vague that hanging on to college of HE status would relegate us in the marketplace.”

University D Interview 4

Views were, however, expressed that cast some doubt as to whether it was always so clear cut when examining the market, and whether it might not always be possible to take a lead from the evidence presented by the market:

“... we are being told constantly to be responsive to the market but actually it's not all that clear what the markets wants ...”

University D Interview 2

It was also questionable as to whether it might be best to retain aspects of the culture and tradition since this might be a strength that could be built on in order to differentiate themselves from competitors:

“... you can't ignore the market, I think we have some choices, one of which is how far to retain the kind of culture and ethos, and there are certain questions of what stays in the curriculum and what doesn't ...”

University D Interview 4

In summary it may be considered that the institutions are responsible for pursuing the markets, be it a specific niche market, specific labour market, specific financial market or a specific reputational market, which they hope will eventually meet their strategic planning targets. If markets are placed in context it may be considered that in the UK there are two market views: the state-led system-centred and top-down view, and the institution centred bottom-up approach which tends to be rooted more in the institution's own understanding and perception of itself.

5.3.2 Strategic Planning

Most change initiatives seem to develop from the organisation's strategic plan and vision and there is strong belief that a plan which has logic and is influenced by all within the organisation does have more credibility and is helpful in implementing change:

“The vice-chancellor acts more like a CEO – wanting advice from the Board of Governors but not interference – more like the US/Australian system, but eventually producing a strategic plan that is developed by all the parties concerned.”

University C Interview 1

“... I felt that although we had a strategic plan ... it really didn't have ownership – and ownership is an issue.”

University A Interview 1

“... I get all the faculties to produce a faculty plan, bottom up and top down approach, and I get all the divisions to do theirs, so we have about twelve different bodies inputting ...”

University A Interview 1

The employment of management practices that include good strategic planning and leaner organisational structures was viewed as part of the change process:

“Initial investment of time and effort in planning will lead to greater effectiveness long term.”

The Times Higher December '05

“The structural changes are related to the strategic success of the institution and the flat responsive nature of the organisational structure and systems so that the university can adapt quickly to ‘customers’ needs and to those of the wider environment.”

University C Interview 1

As may be observed from the above responses the strategic nature of the organisation coupled with its structural changes has a direct relationship on meeting the needs of the external stakeholder groups.

There was some evidence to suggest that initial pressures from government bodies were now less than in the earlier days of incorporation and that this allowed more freedom in terms of strategy and its implementation:

“... there is some evidence to indicate that government policies do influence direction, however, this has over the years become less and less, and autonomy is increasing in allowing the universities to develop within their own strategic plan.”

University C Interview 1

“The devolvement of power does allow the university to respond to social, economic and political needs quickly but there is still some reluctance on the part of some academics to embrace this; however the university is at an early stage in the merger process and feels that this will change.”

University C Interview 1

Yet in those institutions that have recently gained university status there was still a strong commitment to meeting the formal planning arrangements:

“There are a number of challenges that the new university will face and we have attempted to address these in creating a seven school structure that fits the development strategy for 2004-2007.”

University D Interview 1

“We need to ensure that we consider carefully what we do and how we do it then deploy the necessary resources to make it happen, review and see how we are doing and refine and improve what we do so we have a continuous process.”

University D Interview 1

Interestingly, and raised during only one interview, was the idea that an under performing institution might be allowed to go into liquidation just as a business might do:

“The truth is that if a university is incompetent [at management] it may as well be allowed to go to the wall, so in that sense I believe in private enterprise.”

University B Interview 1

A counter argument to this proposition came, however, with a political overtone and suggested that although the treasury might be looking for economic gains through amalgamation or rationalisation there are politicians who view a university in their constituency to be very important:

“... who say no, what is important is ... my local university, so you have these constant ‘knee jerk’ [reminders] that you are seeking to get better value for money ...”

University A Interview 1

5.3.3 Organisational Structure

It was relatively clear from the response that senior managers felt there had been a ‘flatter and leaner’ structure created, but on closer examination they were still hierarchical and, in some instances, significant power, especially financial was retained at the centre. What became apparent was that certain decision-making authority had been devolved but was still closely monitored in order to ensure compliance with the strategic objectives:

“... the [organisational] structure is flatter than it used to be but there is still a hierarchy that is needed to ensure operational effectiveness.”

University A Interview 1

“The structure is relatively flat that enables responsiveness to the social and local needs, but feedback loops to the strategy are very important.”

University C Interview 1

“The structural changes are related to the strategic success of the institute and the flatter responsive nature of the organisational structure and systems is so that the university can adapt quickly to customers’ needs and those of the wider environment.”

University C Interview 1

“... the academic heads of the department have devolved budgets, although at the moment ... we hold the staffing budget centrally ...”

University A Interview 1

“Schools are allowed to spend budget as they see fit within the limitations of the strategic plan. No need to get permission to spend or sign off contracts or grants.”

University C Interview 1

Those recently created, 2005, new universities viewed that structural change provided the means to improve efficiency and effectiveness even though there is little evidence to suggest that their original structures were any less effective than the implemented new ones:

“... the structural changes involved the formation of the seven schools, headed by deans, but also cross university functions ...”

University D Interview 1

“A major effect was restructuring the organisation to meet the needs of the demands placed upon it ...”

University E Interview 1

“The way we’ve tackled the changes in the organisational structure and processes ... is being driven by the senior management team and by the vice-chancellor and me in particular.”

University D Interview 2

“What we’ve done in the last couple of years, and put into place just over a year ago, and kind of ‘tweaked it’ this year, is we’ve increased the number of schools, reduced their size and created groupings of cognate subjects.”

University D Interview 2

5.4 Stewardship

A common concern about academic organisations is their difficulty in changing, yet the external and business environments, coupled with administrators and policy makers, find that this ‘foot-dragging’ approach to change is no longer acceptable (Meyer, 2002). Clark (1998) points out that in order to control their destiny academic institutions must become more entrepreneurial and move away from bureaucratic organisational structures. Similar to other complex organisations, universities need to improve their ability to position themselves pro-actively in ever increasing differentiating market segments and turbulent environments. In order to achieve this, new organisational structures, procedures and practices need to be adopted to enable the entrepreneurial activity to succeed. There is the requirement for senior managers to then engage fully with staff to gain a clear commitment to envisaged changes.

5.4.1 Management Practices

The deans are considered key to delivering the change process. Their role is to persuade and motivate their teams and their operations with practical commitment to sanction that change. This enables staff and faculty to focus their attention on the changes required and concentrates their minds on the priorities that will secure

the future of the institution. This means that managers need to be actively involved in changes to processes, incentives, training and management style as much as communication.

The lives of manager-academics involve long hours packed with meetings, paperwork, e-mail and the constant need for extra resources, with little time for reflection – supported by Deem & Hillyard's (2001) research. These managers felt that being both an academic as well as a member of the senior management team imported increased tensions. It was noted that few had received any formal training although some were undertaking a generic leadership development programme:

“The deans are essentially the change agents and we are developing their managerial capability through involvement in leadership programmes and action learning sets ...”

University D Interview 1

“I am currently involved in delivering a leadership development programme to the university executive team ... but that is just part of the change management strategy, which for me is a device that [reinforces that] newly appointed deans understand their role; they have a clear vision of what their responsibilities and obligations are.”

University D Interview 2

“... it has been interesting [leadership development] and I've enjoyed it so yes I think, that it is (action learning).”

University D Interview 3

There was evidence that most had been involved in informal learning, along the lines of the processes described by Lave & Wenger in their research about how occupational skills are passed on in communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 2000). Interviewees commented on how early experiences of developing and running courses or managing departments had helped them to prepare for more difficult tasks and posts later. In order to support management roles, individuals also used their particular strengths, skills and the knowledge absorbed from their own disciplines.

In an organisation as complex as a university, the data indicates that leading change cannot rest with one person, or one function:

- Senior management has to support the bold steps of change
- Middle managers have an important role in leading the change
- In cultural change, the change agents in some cases are faculty who embrace the needs of student-centred values

Honest communication, trust, support and visibility of top management are crucial to the success of change. When embarking on the transition from college to university status everyone should actively live with the new values otherwise the transition will take much longer to achieve if colleagues are embedded in a 'how we do things around here' mindset. Senior management is the face of change, and it is their responsibility to clearly articulate the vision in order to reduce any barriers to change, and ensure that the change effort is resourced, so as to recognise the need to empower people and further support the 'walk the talk' approach (Peters & Waterman, 1982). There were, however, concerns raised by manager-academics indicating that they were being asked to undertake change that they may not always agree or be comfortable with.

"... I don't think there is ... complete unanimity and consensus at the top ... people do have quite different views ... fundamental differences."

University D Interview 3

"... the thing is there are fundamental tensions right at the top ..."

University D Interview 3

"Now it might be, I [am] you know, fighting a losing battle here because you know I am not the vice-chancellor."

University D Interview 3

"... we did need to ensure that people were able to express their fears and hopes and to put their point of view forward ... so it was the senior manager's view that we should engage in this dialogue and ensure that we championed the change and showed clear commitment."

University E Interview 1

“So in effect they [academic managers] have to use a ‘carrot and stick’ approach in enacting change, encouraging, motivating but at the same time ensuring their school remains on track within the overall corporate strategy ...”

University E Interview 1

“But if they’ve [staff] had to do it themselves then it is more likely to be accepted.”

University D Interview 4

The research indicates that academic-managers do face tensions and are torn between their academic professional status and that of being a senior manager who has been designated to enact decisions that they may not always agree with:

“... there is always a tension between managing academic staff and being part of a management team ...”

University D Interview 2

“... it is a tension yes, I don’t think it’s – I mean [on] the whole I wouldn’t feel comfortable with – the kind of line management sort of thing, you know concepts of managerial concepts I don’t really feel comfortable with them...”

University D Interview 3

“I make the distinction that they do not go entirely down the managerial route and culturally the non-academic decisions can create problems ... like Oxford who do have problems in changing structures since they still want academic freedom.”

University A Interview 1

“So there is this kind of political come academic type of process where you [dean] are part [of] that, and you are having to make a decision on how to position yourself.”

University D Interview 3

“You are caught in the middle and in the end you’re driven to looking for – in the end, the right word is compromise ...”

University D Interview 3

“As to the tension, well yes there inevitably is the feeling, because as part of the management team it is our responsibility to ensure that the institution meets its obligations ... but at the same time meet the needs of the staff in determining what is best for students.”

University D Interview 4

5.4.2 Senior Managers as Leaders and Change Agents

Throughout the change design, transition and maintenance stages of the change process, the change agents must receive unequivocal support from senior managers. Regular meetings and visibility are aspects that maintain the change process. Generally, the role of senior managers is to communicate to the deans and heads of department the importance of their roles as change agents whilst ensuring that they are given the time to experiment and adjust any implemented strategies. In each of the universities investigated there was little, if any, resistance to change in the transitional stages, since most individuals could see the benefits that would eventually flow. The main issue that concerned change agents was the reassurance that the senior management was fully supportive of their role.

External change agents were not used in any of the discussions with the interviewees. It was felt that although external people may bring some new ideas to the process, the educational function was such a specialised and complex system that the people best suited to the role were people designated from within. Generally those people were selected for their knowledge of the organisation and their personality, together with their commitment to the change process and their ability to communicate, discuss and resolve any issues that might arise. They also needed sufficient managerial authority to be able to make decisions in the process of consultation and to convince sophisticated individuals that the transition would have a beneficial effect. Most of those who acted as change agents, i.e. deans and heads of department were not trained managers but came from academic backgrounds. As such their academic primary function was discipline centred, but in the role of change agent this became of secondary value. It was, therefore, considered important that those who undertook this role eventually viewed the organisation from a new perspective, and were encouraged to act as role models in the process.

It was crucial to establish at the outset that the change agent clearly understood the implications and realised the real possibilities. In this way, preparations were deployed to lead others empathetically toward the possible opportunities. Other characteristics deemed to be of paramount importance were: the ability to act as facilitator, experience in looking at issues 'outside of the box', and a willingness

to empower others. The ability to listen, address feedback and respect the others' point of view whilst being able to relax with people and remain transparent when considering the objectives was also imperative. Also, the ability to identify the key people who would be able to influence the process was viewed as essential as well as being able to negotiate with them. They, also, had to be able to counsel and understand people, identify what motivated them and convince them that there were several different routes to the same destination. Finally, the ability to be a skilled problem solver was required.

In all the interviews undertaken, the deans were seen to be the main agents of change. Even though they were part of the senior management structure, they were the link between the top managers and the staff:

(So the dean is acting like a change agent) "That's exactly right, I think there are two crucial elements the dean and the head of department because the HOD, again people say that the HOD can't make any difference, but they make a huge difference, because their job is to stick close to their discipline, because they have to make sure that what we are offering is attractive to students ..."

University A Interview 1

"We've put new deans of school in post and they have their own school executive group, made up of heads of subject. Now they are the change agents."

University D Interview 1

"The deans are essentially the change agents and we are developing their skills through involvement in leadership programmes and action learning sets."

University D Interview 1

However, it was evidenced that this role may not enable them to produce immediate results and that time and a learning process would be necessary if change is to be implemented effectively:

"It takes five years [to make change]. You've got to get ownership down there. It's no good having ownership up here. You've got to get each admission's tutor knowing what the targets are and if he doesn't meet that target, knowing that it has knock-on consequences ... you've got to have very 'savvy' deans and heads of department."

University A Interview 1

“In the latter case [improvements] this is where the change agents will become essential in moving the institution forward to where we want it to be.”

University D Interview 1

Generally, academic managers did see the need to implement change:

“Academic managers or manager academics do see the need to manage more effectively ...”

University C Interview 1

But there was an acceptance that:

“Senior managers [are] seen as change agents but some departments [are] more willing to accept change ...”

University C Interview 1

At the same time those charged with implementing the change did see the value in having a wider view of the organisation and working as team:

“... the cross university role is worthwhile but I think the key if you like to changing ... is to work together and be flexible and acting as change agents.”

University D Interview 3

5.4.3 Senior Management Leadership

Most interventions aimed at securing significant organisational change depend heavily on effective leadership. The leaders, model openness, risk taking and the reflection necessary for learning, and communicate a compelling vision of the future, at the same time providing empathy, support and personal advocacy to lead others toward it.

A visible senior management leadership is mentioned throughout the transcriptions as helpful in driving consistent behaviour. A senior management team should demonstrate that internal alignment is a high priority for everyone via their own commitment to goals, values and behaviours:

“From a senior management viewpoint it is necessary to have transparent and close leadership ... in order to inculcate shared values.”

University D Interview 1

“This [leadership] then leads to an effective human resource strategy that empowers people and creates coherence and importantly consistency in policy making ...”

University D Interview 1

By using verbal, and matching actions and the initiatives they support, senior management teams can demonstrate that the institution is serious about keeping its promise:

“I suppose as a manager you are somewhere in the middle ... you support, encourage and help to empower them ...”

University D Interview 3

“So it was the senior manager’s view that we should engage in dialogue and ensure that we championed the change and showed clear commitment.”

University E Interview I

From the discussions there is evidence to indicate that the change process is facilitated by using change agents who are committed to the process, although in one case the dean who was interviewed did have some concerns as to the direction that the institution was taking and what influence he had on the decision making process. Change agents act as role models and possess a wide range of communication skills, which they are able to deploy in order to assist in reducing anxiety and to gain the confidence of those who may doubt the reasons and motivations of senior managers.

It was felt that the academics best suited to ‘champion’ the changes were the deans of school but they required guidance as to their role from other senior managers. As may be gleaned from the respondents it would be foolish to pretend that this was viewed as a wholly positive experience. Many colleagues became cynical about their managerial responsibilities, and several academics in particular resisted change, and found it difficult to accept the fact that they should be

managed as opposed to remaining totally autonomous. In order to achieve changes, it was, therefore, essential to invest in the leadership skills of key players in an attempt to change employees' attitudes, beliefs, norms, and to reduce fears of uncertainty and anxiety.

5.4.4 Communication

Communication was seen as a vital aspect in the change process especially through the adoption of a clearly defined strategic plan, with defined policies that would be perceived as transparent, and which included issues relating to human resource management and infrastructure development supported by a decision making process:

“Generally, this [communication] is not too much of an issue especially if the decisions have been made in a transparent manner, but on occasions it may be necessary to decide on a course of action and ensure it happens.”

University D Interview 4

“In terms of management functions it was necessary, and still is, to be transparent in what is happening and that meant ensuring that there was co-ordination and communication at all levels, which gave rise to regular staff briefings both from myself and the deans and a team of fifty who would act as the change agents and facilitators in an action learning role.”

University E Interview 1

The channels of communication were clearly seen to be part of the overall leadership strategy in aiming to keep people informed so that they, in turn, may be able to explain to stakeholders the changes that were happening with a view to ensuring that client group's aspirations were met:

“By employing this strategy [leadership] management will be effective in decision making with good lines of communication. This hopefully will lead to fulfilled people working for the organisation in harmony with customers whose needs are satisfied and which are relevant to the rest of society.”

University D Interview 1

“... the team knew and supported the direction that we needed to take and were able to answer questions clearly and with clarity in order to reduce any barriers that might exist.”

University E Interview 1

“There is a process of constant interaction between the senior managers and the academic leaders and the academic staff.”

University D Interview 2

The role that senior managers played in ensuring that individuals and groups within the organisation were kept informed, was one that all senior personnel considered to be vital in securing the effective implementation of changes:

“... you need to be careful that any change programme you have in place needs to be orchestrated properly and you need to bring people with you ...”

University D Interview 2

“... so my mind set is fundamentally ... I believe in consulting, including taking people with me ... you’ve got to persuade them that what they are doing makes some kind of sense.”

University D Interview 3

Similarly, there was a desire on the part of many managers to listen to the views, comments and concerns of those actively involved in the process in order to understand, learn and to maybe change direction; to be continually reviewing the strategy together whilst working to engage people in the process in a bid to embed the changes into the culture:

“The managing, sharing and application to learning, coupled with experiences, is essential in the process of making changes which enable continuous improvement.”

University D Interview 1

“... you have to go and talk to them.”

University A interview 1

“But if people have had to do it [change] themselves then it is more likely to be accepted.”

University D Interview 4

In a slightly different context, i.e. that of a merger between institutions, communication is perceived to be essential in order to prove to all involved that the proposed strategy could bring benefits to all:

“... the communication strategy was of the relationship [merger] being enhanced and improvements for all including ‘customers’.”

University C Interview 1

The concept of ‘management by walking about’ appeared to be a more effectively employed mechanism. This was viewed as a valuable tool in breaking down barriers and reducing the need for formal meetings with all the incumbent issues surrounding them:

“There has been a huge reduction in the number of formal committees – ‘management by walking about’ is seen as more practical now, and the vice-chancellor is very supportive of a communication system that is on a need to know.”

University C Interview 1

“... I do try to use the concept of ‘management by walking about’, and I think it is very important that people see you and need to identify who you are.”

University D Interview 2

Not all senior managers were comfortable with this role, however, and would need to be encouraged to participate more actively:

“I have just been through one of these 360 degree feedback things where they do psychometric tests and all that kind of stuff and apparently I need to do more of ‘management by walking about’ ...”

University D Interview 3

5.4.5 Academic Perspective

Senior managers in general are aware that academics view the institution to be secondary to their own professional freedom and perceive their role as one of delivering the curriculum. The responsibility for the effective functioning of the organisation should, it is assumed, be left to management:

“... loyalty to the institution is an international phenomenon ... they [academics] are just not involved in the university and this is a very real problem ... then building up of loyalty is very hard.”

University B Interview 1

“... well I think academic institutions have a real issue around academic staff morale, and it's because academics are trained to analyse, and pick holes in any argument and they owe very little loyalty to their institution ...”

University A Interview 1

“... are just not involved in the university and this is a very real problem ... I have found on the whole that private institutions were able to get people working together more easily ... as President of a university or college you actually have more power and influence, and then you have a lot more loyalty.”

University B Interview 1

“Regarding academics there are issues surrounding academic freedom but there is no control over what is taught providing it meets the course requirements, but there are issues surrounding who pays the salary at the end.”

University C Interview 1

“Research is encouraged and supported so academic freedom is guaranteed, but some academics need to be reminded of who pays the cheque at the end of the month.”

University C Interview 1

And, as one senior manager indicated, academics do not appreciate that in order to survive, recruitment targets need to be achieved and that places demands on the institution to achieve:

“... there is no connection in an academic's mind between being able to recruit students and the department surviving.”

University A Interview 1

Yet many interviewees indicated that there are issues that they, as senior managers, need to address if the institution is to move forward, and that involves creating a climate in which professional academics can operate:

“Culture is a major issue in change, bringing together belief systems and values is important ...”

University C Interview 1

“... what it means is trying to get a sense of shared purpose.”

University A Interview 1

“... I do my very best to demonstrate that these things are there to facilitate their work, not create more difficulties for them; it can be regarded as you say, change upon change.”

University D interview 2

All the interviewees were former, or are active, academics in their own right and as such empathised with their colleagues and were concerned that change over the years had resulted in some serious issues that needed to be addressed by them as senior managers and by others such as government:

“The learning environment, the encouragement to learn, which you would expect in a HE context is being damaged by the ‘factory’ model and I think they feel disempowered and embattled ... a major [result] increasing across the sector is stress related illness, so there is something very serious happening out there as a result of these huge increases in student numbers.”

University D Interview 2

“... reflecting on education in general terms, change is just all pervasive. It has been for a long time and that is the very culture in which we live so ‘constant change’ is here to stay, you become acclimatised to it.”

University D Interview 3

“... I think that the problem is that when ones colleagues reach a stage where change is too fast and furious there is too much change going on all the while, initiative after initiative, innovation after innovation it becomes rather wearisome and in the end the spirit can wilt.”

University D Interview 3

“... but they feel [change] is being very much thrust upon them largely as a result of external drivers ...”

University D Interview 3

As such, one senior manager felt strongly enough to consider that:

“... what I am convinced of though, is that many staff feel embattled
...”

University D Interview 2

“They feel powerless and this is a serious issue.”

University D Interview 2

5.4.6 Issues of Managing Change through Action Learning

In terms of the processes used to implement the change process, how therefore, have the outcomes manifested themselves? All of the researched institutions have succeeded in metamorphosing themselves either through merger or change and have achieved the targets set down in their strategic plan. This indicates that whatever change process they initiated has been successful, and it would appear that the main process used to effect is leadership development through action learning:

“... getting them [academics] to understand the nature of the cycle through an action learning process ... lots of discussion, lots of discussion at senior management team seminars, lots of discussion all the time, then you can say this is what we are doing and put it on the web, on the staff e-mail, that this is what we are doing and then shut up!”

University A Interview 1

“There has been the devolvement of power and responsibility but still there is a reluctance to take this on by academics, therefore, an action learning approach has been taken with the schools, with the deans acting as facilitators.”

University C Interview 1

“Educational change is complex, more so than business change, and requires a greater number of managerial skills than business due to the diversity of the organisation and the variety and power of the stakeholders.”

University C Interview 1

“... we are developing their managerial [change agents] capability through the involvement in leadership programmes and action learning sets, and by ensuring that they can make the decisions that they need to make in order for the schools to develop.”

University D Interview 1

“In the process of change I see several enablers: leadership, people, policy and strategy, partnerships and resources and processes. If you can get these right then there are a number of results that should emerge such as: people are satisfied in their role; the customers’ needs are met; there is financial security for the institution and you have key performance results that can be measured and improved upon.”

University D Interview 1

“... staff briefing both by myself, the deans and the team of fifty who would act as the change agents and be the facilitators in an action learning role, in order to ensure that there was no complacency. The challenge is to maintain that motivation and to raise the game.”

University E Interview 1

“I am currently involved in delivering a leadership development programme to the university executive team ... and initially my role is to act as a facilitator in an action learning environment.”

University D Interview 2

“The Leadership Foundation are tackling that [change management] more obviously in terms of thinking in a more effective way ... they address some of the issues in a more transparent sort of way.”

University D Interview 3

“I think that must have been part of the idea [action learning] to try and breakdown the whole ‘silo’ mentality which was apparent and to look for links and not simply within each school but across schools and across the institution. It has been interesting and I’ve enjoyed it.”

University D Interview 3

The change agency with its cast of characters has led to the development of leaders through an action learning process. An integral part of success, now and in the future, will be through leadership development. The process of action learning and its ability to develop the ‘whole leader’ for the ‘whole organisation’ may be one method that requires consideration.

5.5 The Overlap

The overlap applies in different forms in all organisations and is difficult to resolve because of the variety of fields of activity. The research revealed that by employing action research techniques, leaders and change agents instigate action learning sets as a development tool to overcome these aspects. Academic leaders not only require the skills and knowledge that are needed in this role but need to

be aware of the significant pressures that are placed on an institution at times of change and in its everyday business environment.

5.5.1 Customers

The change in attitude towards students was expressed quite clearly by one senior manager who had extensive experience in the sector:

“The organisation is much more customer driven than when I first joined over thirty years ago.”

University A Interview 1

As would be expected there is a close relationship between, market, customers and structure, and the language and terminology used by senior managers was typical of many managers in the business environment:

“... the concerns we have as a senior management team about making sure the organisation transforms itself into an institution that looks and feels like a university and deals with its clients like a university.”

University D Interview 1

“... [the] responsive nature of the organisational structure and system [is] so that the university can adapt quality to customers needs and to those of the wider environment.”

University C Interview 1

“Then there are the ‘NCOs’ or the front line management team of course leaders who need to ensure that what is being delivered meets the expectations of the consumers.”

University E Interview 1

“... [universities] have the responsibility to serve the needs of their client group ...”

University D Interview 2

A view that was expressed was that the institution might change and evolve in a different way if it only had to consider the expectations of those who paid for the service rather than having to take cognisance of all of its stakeholders:

“Maybe if we looked at the context whereby we only had to answer to our paying stakeholders, consumers, the students the customers ... things would be a bit different.”

University D Interview 3

5.5.2 Recruitment and Growth

As would befit the development of a business culture and pressures placed on higher education from government bodies, especially with regard to meeting targets and increasing the number of students within the sector, senior managers are more concerned than ever that recruitment and growth figures are met:

“... what we are saying now is go for growth but do not under recruit ...”

University A Interview 1

“... but we will be very careful we do not under recruit so trying to get a steady state is difficult.”

University A Interview 1

The pressure to achieve targets and compare and contrast them with competitors and the details supplied to the HEFC in the strategic planning process is significant:

“At the review stage we need to record our results and consider the trends with a view to looking for positive trends using targets to focus on improvement coupled with making comparisons with the best.”

University D Interview 1

“... they [managers] send back a minimum enrolment target and then we look at them and say we will want you to pull that down or this one up – but this is really with the dean and the head and as far as most staff are concerned ... we could debate this for a couple of years. It has taken a long time for [them to realise] and they are still not totally there, that there is some connection in an academic’s mind between that [number enrolled] and the money they get.”

University A Interview 1

It is, therefore, viewed of utmost importance at crucial times in the recruitment process to ensure that senior managers are fully aware of the situation and have the necessary authority to deal with any issues that arise:

“... we need somebody quite senior around at clearing so that you are sure that if one place is under recruiting you get compensation elsewhere.”

University A Interview 1

“Feedback loops to [recruitment] strategy are seen as very important.”

University C Interview 1

At the same time there is concern that targets that promote growth do create other problems

“Although here we have probably grown unusually quickly I think that brings other pressures, such as how do we find the necessary resources to meet the demands, and this is not purely staff but a whole range of requirements to meet the demands that students expect in today’s environment”.

University D Interview 3

Demands placed on senior managers in the university sector are significant bearing in mind the increased sophistication of the client group and the level of competition between institutions, especially those within a relatively small conurbation similar to those universities studied in this project.

5.5.3 Competition

This level of competition is frequently expressed in terms of examining the recruitment profiles and looking for positive trends and making comparisons with local and national competitors:

“... at the review stage we need to record our results and consider the trends with a view to looking for positive trends then using targets to focus on improvement coupled with making comparisons with the best.”

University D Interview I

“... the environment that we are working in is very competitive and turbulent ...”

University E Interview 1

Status is also reflected in the need to compete and seen as an essential element in the mix:

“The consequences were that the status [university] was necessary if the organisation was to compete.”

University E Interview 1

It was interesting to note that rationalisation may be a mechanism that could improve the institutions position and that by incorporating two universities it may be possible to out-manoeuvre competitors:

“A major reason for bringing the two institutions together, even though we worked closely together in the past, was to maintain a competitive edge with those in the region but more essentially nationally and internationally.”

University C Interview 1

It was also interesting to note that reputation may equally play a part in the competition stakes and that placing the institution as a more ‘traditional’ organisation may have some value:

“... it [the university] has pitched itself with its logo as a pretty traditional university quite deliberately ...”

University D Interview 4

Perhaps more importantly are the implications that if the competition is too strong and this results in the institution being unable to compete successfully then drastic, if unpalatable action is required:

“... for instance when I looked at physics and our numbers were going down – Manchester was very strong and on research as well as teaching; Liverpool was doing very well; Salford reasonably well; but when I noticed Liverpool, John Moore’s was much better than we were and Central Lancashire was much better and at that point I gave up and I just said we cannot survive in this market. ... and when I closed the department of physics ... it was absolutely traumatic and now we are going through a similar thing with languages.”

University A Interview 1

From this account it may be seen that senior managers in the sector have become much more ruthless at comparing their institutions with one another and have to

take difficult decisions in the best interests of the organisation in order to meet their own strict strategic planning targets.

5.5.4 Cultural Change

In the post-1992 and 2005 institutions the main cultural change was the perceived improvement in status. The polytechnics had suffered the stigma of being viewed as a 'second choice' route even though they were able to award the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) degree, which in many cases was a more effectively validated degree than those of the traditional universities. There were many meetings during this time concerned with strategic development, promotional activity and image making. These tended to take the form of communication, through various means, via the Vice-Chancellor's team, i.e. large group sessions and brainstorming meetings with schools regarding the overall strategic direction intended. Team leaders, normally heads of department, were used to develop the strategic objectives, targets and direction within their own functional areas, to ultimately fit within the overall plan. Similarly, the university colleges that have recently been designated university status faced the same sort of issues. The HEFC played a significant role in planning since it set down guidelines that required a five-year rolling strategic plan to cover all the main functional areas. Essentially, however, it was a 'bottom-up' approach that most employees were able to affect to a larger or lesser degree.

“... English universities do tend to be very devolved with power, so they are bottom up institutions rather than top down institutions.”

University B Interview 1

“Culture is a major issue in change, bringing together belief systems and values is important.”

University C Interview 1

The research institutions all appeared to have strong cultures that promoted openness, creativity, and experimentation among individuals and teams. They encouraged members to acquire, process and share information; to nurture innovation and provide the freedom to try new things, and to risk failure and learn from mistakes.

In the institutions studied, organisational culture refers to how members of the base units relate to the whole. In multi-site institutions, sites which were distanced from the main site appeared not to function as experienced networked sites but as 'loosely-coupled' ones at best. These sites often had separate decision-making processes and institutional loyalty amongst their staff was greater at single site institutions. Every institution visited had departments and/or schools, but no firm conclusion was drawn as to how important this mix was.

There was some evidence of organisational change taking place following the change of status, i.e. the merging of smaller departments or the closing down of unprofitable ones and, as would be expected, there was resistance from the staff involved.

"Academics are conservatives in the main, they don't like change. They are also usually very intelligent, questioning and if they do not perceive a good reason for change then they will find a way of obstructing it or at least delaying it ... the sorts of change I've helped to manage ... have been rather more stealthy, if you like ... there always has to be reward, people have to feel ... they have to know that they are valued, that what they're doing is appreciated ... "

University D Interview 1

All the universities had some form of devolved resource model, with base units as cost centres – complete devolution was not evidenced. This was justified by the interviewees as using a policy of 'remote steering' whereby the centre could declare that cost-centres made their own decisions even though the real power was retained by the centre.

There were significant cultural variations between the institutions including history, perceived niche and mission, size, campus bases and the existence of multi-sites were key factors.

5.5.5 Change Process and Tensions

The evidence points to the notion that successful change is planned through the monitoring of both the internal and external environments and that this needs to be undertaken on a continuous basis, and in many ways is a response to the

tensions that are encountered in the process of change. It supports further the notion that part of the change process is concerned with either improving or maintaining recognition of the institution's status and reputation. This supports the concept that change is highly dependent upon how change unfolds in an incremental process, and leads to a recurring cycle of diagnosis, involvement, further diagnosis, change, implementation, reinforcement and evaluation, which form the stages that enable complex organisations to make sense and manage the change process.

However, in the initial mid-term stages there is evidence to suggest that the process of change is more fundamental than an incremental process might indicate:

"I think it is evolutionary change and I think probably from shortly after 1992 when we first became a university ..."

University A Interview 1

"The change over the last few years has not been so much transformational and not emergent either – something in between."

University C Interview 1

"Initially the change process was quite transformational but now I believe [it] will be emergent in the future."

University E Interview 1

"Like transformational change."

University D Interview 3

This form of organisational change has resonance with organisational development interventions, e.g. improvement in organisational performance comes about because of changes in individual member's work behaviour. In turn, behaviour is shaped by the setting within which each member is situated. Organisational development interventions view different aspects of this setting as levers for change that are able to prompt desired behaviours. These include:

- Goals, strategies, structure, policies and procedures and systems
- Culture, management style, interaction processes, informal patterns and networks
- Space configuration, ambience and design
- Technology including equipment and expertise

Many of these aspects of organisational development emerge as the change process is implemented and from the research it became evident that plans emerged as change was initiated, with reflection and feedback being obtained during the evolutionary period. As the process settles down there is a move towards stabilisation:

“This means that the change process has been more incremental in style.”

University D Interview 1

“... I think what we have seen is a kind of evolution over a period of ten to fifteen years ...”

University D Interview 2

“I think the change has been more evolutionary.”

University D Interview 3

From the perspective of a senior manager who had spent many years in the role of academic manager, there was some concern that change in itself brought issues with it that may well affect his ability to manage and maybe his inclination to be actively involved:

“... change is too fast and furious. There is too much change going on all the while, initiative after initiative, innovation after innovation, it becomes rather wearisome and in the end the spirit can wilt.”

University D Interview 3

“It’s been striking how the organisational structure has evolved very rapidly, evolved may be too weak a word, there has been a kind of revolution in a way ...”

University D Interview 3

“As to the tension, well yes there inevitably is the feeling, because as part of the management team it is our responsibility to ensure that the institution meets its obligations ... but at the same time meet the needs of the staff in determining what is best for students.”

University D Interview 4

“... it is a tension yes, I don't think it's – I mean [on] the whole I wouldn't feel comfortable with – the kind of line management sort of thing, you know concepts of managerial concepts I don't really feel comfortable with them ...”

University D Interview 3

At the same time he understood the need to change and in order to mitigate against the pressures to change too quickly he implemented his own change strategy:

“So you end up trying to proceed in a gradual sort of way, introducing things partially ... But all the while you are aware ... that no one can afford to stand still ...”

University D Interview 3

5.6 Preliminary Conclusions

In conclusion the themes that emerged centred on the business environment as context, which is a relatively new phenomenon for those institutions in the UK, whereas this has been part of the culture of Intercollege since its inception. The external environment is significant with regard to how the individual stakeholders perceive higher education and how its services may be utilised by them. Stewardship of the institution as expressed by Donaldson and Davies (1991), and Davies et al., (2001) is focused on leadership and making sure that all managers fully engage with staff. To support this action research is a methodology, resulting in action learning activities, that is employed in the UK to determine the underlying concepts that require addressing. This has yet to be seen as an important and essential ingredient within Intercollege's culture, where control is much more centralised even though there has been a move towards relaxation and devolvement of authority.

A summary of the main results that emerged are indicated in table 5.1 below. What is generally seen is the external pressures of growth which may be in tension with organisational change.

Table 5.1: Summary

Context	Substance	Stewardship	Overlap
Market Needs and Segments	Status	Management Practices	Customers
Strategic Planning	Reputation	Senior Managers as Change Agents	Recruitment and Growth
Organisational Structure	Massification	Leadership	Competition
		Communication	Cultural Change
		Academic Perspective	Change Process and Tensions
		Action Learning	

The literature identifies that change is complex and leadership is essential, but in both the business and change literature, leadership is a requirement to effect change. As the following quote confirms, it is not possible in a higher education environment, as may be the case in some businesses, to simply consider that change will be accepted unequivocally:

“The regard that managers need to have for people around them [during change] has to be much higher, because if these people are treated like drones they will react badly, and they are articulate, strong and wilful people who will make their views known and quite properly so, so you need to be careful that any change programme you have in place needs to be orchestrated, properly and you need to bring people with you ...”
University D Interview 2

This supports the critical analysis of the literature and a case can be proffered to apply the techniques of action research to higher education in change management activities, that results in leaders being developed through action learning.

By employing action research techniques, leaders and change agents instigate action learning sets as a development tool, and in the UK this has been a considerable learning experience, which requires anything up to five years to implement. Nevertheless it is considered an essential aspect of inculcating change within the organisation. This has been supported through leadership development programmes and the further use of action learning sets in order to improve leadership skills. Through this programme the concepts of open communications, transparency and 'management by walking about' have emerged, much of which will be of value in developing Intercollege's managers into leaders.

The research in the UK indicates that although aspects of status and reputation are important, these are likewise true of Cyprus and are reflected in Intercollege's current positioning in that market. Similarly true is the need for the development of leaders with the skills and abilities to move people towards the desired direction, and hence the institution. There are, however, cultural determinants that need to be considered in leadership development in that it may be seen to be more effective in the UK. In Cyprus the cultural aspects in terms of understanding the culture and history of the institution may not lead to the same conclusions.

CHAPTER 6

Intercollege Outcomes

6.1 Introduction

The consequences and outcomes of the research reflect the findings in the literature review that change is complex and in order to implement change, leadership skills and action learning are pivotal elements in the development of change agents. Identifying the need to change is a requirement and once this has occurred then employing effective leadership strategies is vital. Leaders are a critical factor in ensuring successful change and have to be able to manage unpredictability, clashing counter cultures, disensus, contention, conflict and inconsistency. For leaders to develop appropriate skills, as referenced in the UK outcomes, action learning provides the necessary support networks and encourages dialogue aimed at achieving implementation.

Academics report to academic leaders in the UK. It is an expectation and is embedded in the culture and systems of the institution. In Intercollege, the notion of this is relatively new. It is only over the past four years, since the new structure was introduced of schools with deans as managers that the concept has emerged of academics reporting to their academic line manager. Due to the nature of the for-profit status and the entrepreneurial activities of the senior managers, academics previously reported to the administrators. This creates a paradox when changing the status from tertiary college to a university. Because of the implementation of the new structure this obligation has shifted towards the academics but to the best of the author's knowledge, the link between this; the academics becoming effective leaders and being provided with the relevant knowledge and skills, has not been addressed.

As a relatively new organisation in educational terms the case study institution displayed some interesting and expected results. Several major recurring themes emerged from the interviewees and it was apparent from the author's observations

during the interview process that all the managers were being completely honest and open with their comments and views, and were passionate about the future for their institution. They were unanimous in their view that considerable change had taken place during the last four to five years and believed that this situation would not alter in the immediate future – a structure and a set of procedures were now in place that would create incremental change, and managers would need to monitor the evolving nature of change, to be aware of it, and react to it.

The possible change in status from a degree awarding college to that of a fully fledged university surfaced, as expected, as the predominant theme, but there were issues that arose that were both the same and similar to the research findings in the UK.

Due to the size of the organisation and the number of senior managers, a cross-section of five academic and administrator managers was chosen as the sample, and they were interviewed over a period of two months. When topics recurred at least three times with three individual interviewees, or with an individual, it was considered to be a possible theme. Here, the significance highlighted that a manager sensed that this was important and had implications for the institution. Those issues that were often repeated were aggregated into strong themes or sub-themes which revealed a link to the main theme but were often mentioned using different terminology.

The main themes have been categorised under the headings in figure 5:1 (p. 91) in order to provide a framework whereby the project outcomes may be evaluated from a practical standpoint with a view to determining a methodology for implementing a course of action that will assist in the evolutionary change process.

6.2 Substance

In the context of the institution's position in the environment there were several external factors that senior managers had to be mindful of. Since the inception of Intercollege its managers have had to react to situations and take some key decisions, and consequently act in an independent and entrepreneurial way in

order to achieve growth during the short history of the college. In many ways the key stakeholders in the external environment, especially the government, its ministries and 'quango' committees, have been less than helpful in providing guidance and support and to a large extent have been both obstructive and vague about what actually should be undertaken by a private institution to become a university.

"... you have a broader political environment beyond Intercollege that limits a lot of the change. For example when I came here ... I came out with a number of proposals. Well, the response was it's a good idea, however, the Ministry of Education will not allow us to do xyz because the law does not allow us to do xyz. Now the environment changes, even though the Ministry still says a great many things the new law provides for some change. So yes, there are some environmental factors that have encouraged attitudes, and that have created the kind of managerial structure we have up until now."

Manager 3

"... one of the problems here is that we never have a clear direction from government."

Manager 4

"That's why we are having so many problems – things are always vague, they keep asking for forms without any guidance."

Manager 4

It needs to be remembered, however, that the environment in which the college operates is small but complex as there are a number of other educational institutions and it may be that the Ministry is being cautious with reference to aspects such as culture and quality.

"... but you see again in the wider environment, the fact is that there are so many other smaller colleges floating around, we have to overcome that problem as well with the Ministry, because they say we know how these others operate and you are no different from them. So we have the stigma to overcome even though we are not like the others ..."

Manager 3

This may be why it is important to ensure that all aspects of the law are adhered to.

“Yes we have to be willing to come to terms with the new environment. We cannot blame the outside. Right or wrong the law is there. We need to adapt to it.”

Manager 3

“Of course some changes are actually demanded by the law ...”

Manager 2

The institution must also be prepared for the evaluation committee’s visits and if the process is to be successful, then the development of managers is essential, particularly those ‘new’ managers of academics.

“... now we are going to start to get the evaluation and the thing is that many of the members of this committee ... they know us better than we know ourselves ... these people know us and if they know their business they will be asking some pretty penetrating questions ...”

Manager 3

Coupled with this is the requirement to clearly show that the processes and procedures demanded by the law have begun to take place.

“... some of the things that are essential in the functioning of a university and which are part of the law, for example, academic processes and decisions will have to be taken more and more by the academics, in specified ways.”

Manager 5

6.2.1 Status and Reputation of the Institution

Intercollege does have a status in the wider environment in which it operates and is acknowledged as the largest provider of tertiary education on the island. Nevertheless, status as a university is not automatic in the ‘eyes of the customer’ and has to be earned, as is clearly enunciated in the UK outcomes. In the interviews with Intercollege’s managers, the importance of status appeared to be reflected in the amount of research that could be undertaken, as though this aspect conferred a reputation on the institution. Research is still deemed to be a most important part of university status.

“... we have to start acting like [a university] ... in terms of research ...”

Manager 3

“... [the] theory is that you cannot be a good teacher without doing research. I suspect that with our kind of students it’s actually the other way round, but research builds reputation and status in a university and hopefully we are going to develop that.”

Manager 2

It was, however, acknowledged that it was not possible for what is primarily a teaching institution to dramatically change its stance and become a major research organisation.

“... it’s like when we started moving towards research. At some point I got the kind of feeling it was being fanatical, this is not the reality. Yes, we are a teaching institution to begin with yet a university needs to do that [research], but we could not transform ourselves into a top rate research institution in a short period of time and I don’t think we can survive only on that, because our income comes from student’s fees.”

Manager 5

“Yes, we want the research because it is a characteristic of a university. It also helps teaching when you have academics who are involved in research, which means they can pass on the latest information in their field to their students. On the other hand we cannot be the kind of research institution which has other sources of funding and may be the teaching is the minor element in what it does, but in our case this cannot be so because once you neglect that you have a drop in numbers you won’t have the resources to maintain research.”

Manager 5

It was also accepted that due to external pressures the research undertaken would more than likely have applied applications similar to that of the post-1992 institutions in the UK.

“... research funding nowadays is not funding for academic purposes in either the EU or the Cyprus Research Foundation. For academic purposes, the researcher has to prove that the research has potential purposes.”

Manager 2

“This means that the whole framework for research is becoming more academic ... the reason is we look at it [research] seriously in academic terms. We look for evidence.”

Manager 2

6.3 Context

Although the institution was recognised essentially as a business in the widest definition of the word, it was also viewed as a much more complex organisation, which related closely to the outcomes from the UK. Its function and entrepreneurial activities were judged an advantage in achieving the growth boom over the past twenty plus years. In spite of this its ‘business’ activities would require reconsideration if university status is to be granted and more importantly maintained in the future. This business aspect echoed only partial resonance with the way in which the UK universities operated, though they too were conscious of the business environment and the importance of the customer.

“As a charismatic organisation Intercollege is a classic example. They reach a plateau and if it really is going to grow to the next level of excellence, whatever that next level happens to be, they need to change the way they are looking at themselves and doing their business. The business they are in I mean.”

Manager 3

“But the management style is [led by] the owner [who] is still at the centre of the decision making [process], so in this respect in this type of business it’s a natural flow from top to bottom. If you look at it as an academic institution this is where the conflict is because to have collective involvement it needs to be bottom up.”

Manager 1

“Here we still have an institution built around the founder and this is not negative ... But, still it is an egocentric institution and that’s why I call it charismatic and that’s the big difference because everything hinges there.”

Manager 3

“I think you need to look seriously at the private ownership element and how the private owner changes ...”

Manager 3

“It’s another thing to be a corporation functioning as a corporation with a profit line at the bottom and making corporate decisions, then trying to become a corporate institution with, in quotes, ‘university status’.”

Manager 3

Apart from the general issues surrounding the ‘business’ operational aspects, concerns were voiced as to how managers actually master those attitudinal aspects that would need to change.

“... I don’t think that [senior managers] people who have been accustomed to working in a certain *modus operandi* will automatically change. I believe this is going to take some time to come.”

Manager 1

“... it may have been perfectly good twenty years ago because of the nature of the institution but unless – things evolve and institutions adapt to the changing environment and change has to come at all levels because we have arrived here, where we are, because of charismatic leaders ...”

Manager 3

“... but the fact that they [senior managers] themselves have to change to fit the model of a university.”

Manager 3

“I can see how their [senior managers] formative experiences still train their thinking about day to day issues ...”

Manager 3

“... but still a lot of people cut side deals. Now again, in an entrepreneurial institution, that’s how things have been done ...”

Manager 3

One manager in particular did not view the organisation in the same way as others did and this may be a reflection on their particular positions within the institution.

“... but I don’t see a university or a college as a business – ok I understand it can be described as that from different points of view – but I want to believe that we have demonstrated that we don’t look at it as a business in the traditional sense ...”

Manager 4

“If we saw the organisation as primarily a business, the first consideration would have been money for the shareholders ... It was not the first consideration, we decided that for academic reasons ...”

Manager 4

“... I think we’ve got a good record of demonstrating that financial considerations are not the primary ones.”

Manager 4

At the same time there was recognition that the ‘business’ has remained aware of the conditions in which it operates and has made adjustments accordingly to save money.

“Having said that now, you must have noticed we have cut down on some expenses over the last couple of years.”

Manager 4

6.3.1 Market Needs and Segments

As a for-profit-liberal arts and vocational institution Intercollege has always been aware of its market and its need to attract students through the development of innovatory programmes that meet the market’s requirements.

“We were the first to introduce multi-media, nursing and law programmes and we persevered with low numbers, but now we are starting to see these increase.”

Manager 2

“It has always been our aim to meet the needs of the local community, and now increasingly the international market, so our approach has always been to look at market potential.”

Manager 5

“In this school we have been very active in asking employers what their requirements are for the future and designing programmes that are likely to meet their needs.”

Manager 1

6.3.2 Strategic Plan

Although there has always been a strategic plan in place, the law (issued in July 2005) contained the specific criteria that private colleges would have to fulfil if

they were to be granted university status. Part of the submission to the Ministry of Education required a comprehensive strategic plan.

“We have always had a strategic plan, of sorts, but the law insisted that we rewrite this in a particular format and we will need to defend it with the accrediting committee.”

Manager 3

“Part of the procedure of applying for university status was to write a plan. We had to sit down in formal and ad hoc bodies to study the criteria and we did put together the strategic plan for the next four or five years.”

Manager 4

“The senior management team have spent many hours putting together the strategic plan that, hopefully, will meet the accrediting team’s requirements for university status.”

Manager 5

6.3.3 Organisational Structure

In the case of Intercollege it was clear, as opposed to the UK, that a hierarchical structure had been developed in anticipation of the requirements of the law and to improve the overall operations of the organisation. It was agreed by all interviewees that the devolvement of decision-making and authority is an essential element if university status is to be secured and that this also requires management personnel to understand and acknowledge their role.

“... now the structure has to be responsive to the submission [for university status] ...”

Manager 3

“Then we started to ask what the [structural] needs would be in the future and we started to implement change from that time.”

Manager 4

“The creation of the schools, deans, heads of department, senate, and rector – all of these were put in place. This would have been more difficult now, but in our case these have been in operation, for a number of years, so it is more fine-tuning of how these are going to work more efficiently.”

Manager 5

“... I don't think there is one specific answer other than everybody at the top needs to accept the fact that decentralisation is a key element in the process.”

Manager 3

“But the decentralisation of decision-making has happened only recently. It has been a slow process.”

Manager 1

“... but as we decentralise there is more that is going to the schools, which they are dealing with at that level with various school committees like the research release committee and school appraisal committee. These were centralised functions before. So these are important changes of how gradually we are separating pure administration from the academic part and the academic administration.”

Manager 5

“... but what we are trying to do is ensure that the new philosophy, structure and so forth become embedded in the culture of the organisation.”

Manager 4

“... the structures that are being introduced quite clearly mean this [devolvment] is taking place and will actually become the dominant feature at a certain foreseeable point in time which is not too far away.”

Manager 1

There are issues to be addressed which have been identified, and this also has resonance with the UK research, but as an evolving institution it may be expected that structures, procedures and processes would require alteration in the light of a changing environment.

“From that point of view we still have some way to go so that people begin to understand their new responsibilities ... it's not a secret, that some of the top management people were over burdened with a lot of work that they had to push through. Some of which now – of the academic nature – will have to be done by the schools. So there has already been a big change.”

Manager 5

“So what I am saying is it’s not so much the letter of the law that’s important but that we know how things are done at Intercollege. We know there is a much more cooperative spirit. Things are done through the proper committees and for every academic matter, things must be discussed at the proper level – this is a new spirit which I think is imbued in the organisation.”

Manager 4

“... but what is interesting for me and is positive, is that we are going in the right direction; that from the beginning the schools have been involved, and now some of this work is being done by the schools.”

Manager 5

“However, if centrally we give the responsibility away, it needs to be ensured that they can deliver, because it will not be easy for us in the future to step in. As more people own something, they own it totally. They can’t expect ownership for part of the year, because administration will not be able to just step in unexpectedly and quickly as has been the case. But the signs are positive I think, over the past two years.”

Manager 5

“Centrally, there is still a lot of work that has to be done. Eventually more of this will be done at school level, as some of the people acquire more experience.”

Manager 5

6.4 Stewardship

Nonetheless, there were those who were concerned that not everything was in place, and serious doubts were cast as to whether change was actually taking place mainly due to worries that some of the ‘old’ ways might still be operating within the college. This was evident in several of the comments concerning leadership.

“... but I keep coming back to the fact that charismatic leaders and charismatic organisations reach a certain level of success and to continue on that path they need to undergo a change.”

Manager 3

“Will they [senior managers] be able to convey the need for change and ... change the way it does things – I have some serious doubts.”

Manager 3

“Right now the [change] issues here have been identified but the implementation has not.”

Manager 1

“Collective participation at the Senate level, openness and discussion of issues with some degree of openness at executive council, but not collective participation because faculty are not involved.”

Manager 1

On the other hand there was recognition that change would have to take place and in order to enact the change, it would be necessary to introduce adjustment slowly and limit the fear it might evoke.

“... we need to be careful that those who are going to take over these things are ready, but it has to [be] gradually – its how we begin one after the other to hand over.”

Manager 5

“From the point of view of the administrators I think again there are two things that need to be done in order to facilitate the change process. One is for the administrators, especially those higher up, to realise that some things will be given away and a new kind of matrix will be established. This has to be accepted and if it is going to work, you have to go through this process. The other, is that some of the administrators will need changing, not so much in the technical things but I would say that they realise their new role ...”

Manager 5

“I actually think it is only human nature that administrators do not wish to relinquish control, its prestige, resources, power ... But I think their conscious actions some five years ago ... they know that they have to do it if they want to become a university.”

Manager 2

6.4.1 Management Practices

During the interviews there was little indication that the notion of change agents had been considered. It had not occurred to many managers that these individuals would be required, and expectation was that all the change initiatives would transcend from the top:

“Given the nature of the institution the change will definitely have to start coming from the top ...”

Manager 3

“... they are not empowered to do these things and they have not been encouraged or trained to do what they have to do as change agents. So the top has to change mentality and trust ...”

Manager 3

Yet it was recognised that change was here to stay and that it may be necessary to ensure that those in managerial positions should be empowered to act, but these individuals were not identified.

“It [change management] needs again more direct intervention and pushing and empowering or whatever of one or more of these, because I think different approaches are for different people ... for me it's a continuous process and it never stops. That's why again, this is why I would hate to use the expression, this is how we were before and the day we become a university it will change.”

Manager 4

“But I am sure when the major changes are out of the way and we begin to look at improvements, this sort of thing would be needed, with mature heads of department who can handle such things and at school level where they would look at things from a wider perspective.”

Manager 5

Change agents need to be identified at all levels in the organisation as is the case in the UK. This gives rise to the urgency to safeguard that agents possess the necessary abilities to lead the change and are able to define and creatively solve problems if they are to be allowed to undertake the responsibilities that are to be delegated to them in order to comply with the law.

6.4.2 Managers as Change Agents

Since the restructuring of Intercollege into schools four years ago senior managers have perceived the deans to be the ones who will implement change:

“... I want deans to have the academic authority and to give them the responsibility to set their agreed goals, but to then get on with it.”

Manager 3

“... the first couple of years after we divided the college into schools it was true the deans were not very sure as to what they were supposed to do ... but gradually and by now they are doing it.”

Manager 4

“As a dean I do feel that I am able to bring about change now, which I don’t think would have been possible four or five years ago.”

Manager 2

There is, however some concern that relinquishing control may have consequences:

“It is not easy once the authority has been delegated to the academics for others to step in and take over if something goes wrong. So along with the authority comes the responsibility. So far it seems to be working but it will take time for academics to take full responsibility for their actions.”

Manager 5

6.4.3 Leadership

Any plan would almost certainly digress from the original, and this is certainly to be expected in the case of Cyprus. Some allowances for differences in implementation would, therefore, need to be acknowledged. In this respect, the monitoring role becomes important for those leading the change.

To be able to identify the need to change is at the heart of effective leadership. In slow changing organisations, as is usually the norm in the university system, it might embrace environmental scanning and/or be resolutely astute regarding what the institution needs to do in order to keep abreast of sectoral developments and best practice.

It is apparent that some leadership exists in Intercollege, especially with those who have acted entrepreneurially during the past twenty-six years of Intercollege’s development. It may prevail in a charismatic format which, out of necessity, has been entrepreneurial and successful. But as highlighted in the UK outcomes, an active and visible leadership, coupled with the ability to be creative in both problem-solving and change initiatives, is one of the prerequisites for

making change happen, and this may be required at a number of different levels to secure that change occurs effectively. It is then incumbent on senior managers to make sure that leaders, especially those new managers of academics, have the skills and abilities to undertake the challenges of change in their areas of responsibility. As the results from the UK have indicated, leadership development should be provided at all levels and remain in place over a significant period of time. Having said that, there is concern that these leaders may not have the strength and commitment to overcome previous practices:

“... the new leadership will really have to make a very strong effort in that direction because if that does not happen in the first year of university status, and we revert to the good old way of doing business again, there will be problems down the road.”

Manager 3

“... but it will take a new generation to be able to break the mould and move on.”

Manager 3

It is a recognised fact that not all managers are good leaders and this reinforces the need to develop an active programme:

“... now in some cases there is not very good follow-up. But that depends on the leadership of the department and the people involved.”

Manager 4

It is also sensed that those who currently hold the power are willing to devolve some of that authority to others:

“I think it is [leadership style] ... that is going to change, for a number of reasons. One is the sheer volume of an organisation as it grows in this way. And, if our expectations of steady growth, in many ways you know, in terms of student numbers, faculty, facilities and so on, then things have to be done locally, because centrally one or two people cannot cope with all this.”

Manager 5

“... yes, because he [the owner] knows the success of this enterprise is important to him – after all it’s his ‘baby’.”

Manager 3

“... I have learnt to work with others and not feel threatened if someone has equal power to me. If the culture again is there and we know how to resolve our differences I don’t see a problem.”

Manager 4

“I think there is to an extent [willingness to change] ...”

Manager 5

“I think it’s going to come, and it already has to a large extent, for example; there are appointments going on that ... does not know about. He will get to know about them eventually, which may not have been the case before.”

Manager 5

6.4.4 Communication

The communication process is seen as a fundamental aspect in change management, so it was not surprising to find that there are issues surrounding this:

“... sooner or later we are going to be confronted with the reality of what we claim we say we do ... so we do need to be more transparent in our communication systems.”

Manager 3

“Everybody knows that decisions are made by somebody else, this reflects on the day to day operations ... the lines of communication have to be made clearer so that there is no by-passing the system, ... his has improved lately but more needs to be done.”

Manager 3

“We still have some way to go in improving our channels of communication, but much of this is to do with the historical nature of Innercollege.”

Manager 5

6.4.5 Academic Perspective

The academic perspective emerges more as an issue surrounding academics’ responsibilities in the future once university status is granted:

“... we should aim at a much more academic culture, we should give tremendous support to academic work.”

Manager 2

“Faculty have to be more aware of their responsibility to the institution as a whole rather than showing up in the morning, doing the minimum expected of them ... along with decentralisation comes responsibility.”

Manager 3

“... academic processes and decision making will more and more have to be taken by the academics in specified ways.”

Manager 5

6.4.6 Action Learning

The interview questions (see appendix II) posed to senior managers at Intercollege raised the notion of employing action learning in the developmental process of leaders. From the responses there was little concept of the action learning process and how it might be used as a tool in management practice:

“I know what you mean in ... where I was, we were to build a new building and the plans were circulated to all faculties, and a committee was established that addressed their concerns.”

Manager 1

“We have been doing that all the time in a sense, we don’t call it action learning, but it’s very much like that. As long as I can remember, including regular committees and one key person from each area, we regularly go to retreats. Here we discuss the development of the college. For example, the last couple of years it has been about university status. We go there prepared with documents. We discuss extensively. We appoint other committees to study things and come back to another session and bring back ideas and so on.”

Manager 4

“If I understand well what you are saying, we have had two or three sessions like this – like workshops. Because when we selected the heads of department a number were new and because the role of coordinator was less, the attempt to give them more responsibility over more things showed that some were not ready from the administrative point of view. So, there were workshops where these things were discussed. Now there are plans in place where a unit has been set-up, where there will be more of these in relation to the functioning within the department, different responsibilities of academics and so on. I think it’s essential because these are early days. You have to get people started and need the training. Others might do it later but also learn something from those with different functions.”

Manager 5

“I think this is where the kind of meeting you were talking about [action learning] will be needed. To show the person that the position in the new set-up ... it is a different role. It may be a different role, but part of it may be significant in another area.”

Manager 5

As evidenced in the UK research, change in higher education can be diverse in nature, i.e. from leadership development and problem solving skills, to including a much wider participation since change is affected and created by individuals and teams.

The role of leading change need not be reserved for senior and middle managers. Change calls for leadership at all levels but senior and middle managers may set the tone and can be important levers in this capacity.

From the author's perspective it would seem that in order to empower and bring about the desired changes in culture, reputation and status, and to further develop the skills of leadership and problem-solving, that some action process which could generate learning should be examined as part of the overall outcome of this project. It is proposed that, through the adoption of an action learning process, the provision of a leadership development course be embraced.

By this enactment a clear identification of the various roles of those involved in the change, and their responsibilities, is more likely to happen. In the UK, the key to the buoyant and effective implementation of change – through the action learning process – has been communication. It has been a vital ingredient in the successful enforcement of the change agenda with senior managers, middle managers, faculty and staff on the ground.

6.5 Overlap

The overlap elements were similar to those revealed in the UK, however, some of the themes were embedded in the responses to other elements and were not so clearly stated. Evidently, Intercollege is aware of the intense competition that it faces for students – ‘customers’ and a major reason for changing status is to encourage more students to be recruited thereby meeting its own objectives in

terms of growth and to align itself with the government's target of becoming a centre of excellence for education.

6.5.1 Customers

As outlined in market needs and segments (see 6.3.1), customers play an important role in a for-profit organisation, since without the income from students the organisation will cease to function:

"... once you neglect [students] and you have a drop in student numbers you won't have the resources to maintain research or the organisation in general."

Manager 5

"Meeting the needs of students is essential to our survival, they have to be central in our planning."

Manager 3

"The way we currently operate as a for-profit organisation, students are our main source of income."

Manager 1

Whether this is likely to change in the future is still unclear and none of the interviewees would speculate as to the recommendations of the university accrediting committee.

6.5.2 Recruitment and Growth

As the UK is concerned with massification, alongside recruitment and growth, Intercollege also sees the necessity to continue to strive for growth:

"We are constantly looking to see where the growth will come from, locally and internationally, so our environmental scanning is important."

Manager 1

"The local market is under fierce pressure now that we are part of the EU, so we have to look at every opportunity to increase our market share, and in the future much of that will be international."

Manager 5

“The majority of our income at present is from students so we have to continue to strive for greater growth through effective recruitment strategies and consider the markets that are ready for recruitment.”

Manager 4

There is praise for the kind of growth that has been achieved and this is considered to be due to the entrepreneurial activities of the senior managers:

“... looking at the twenty-six year history of Intercollege, from where they were in the 1980s and where they are in 2006, no question, I mean incredible steps in student growth and this has to be down to the way the organisation was managed.”

Manager 3

6.5.3 Competition

Local competition is fierce and Intercollege needs to employ all its skills in order to defend its position:

“Per head of population, Cyprus must have the greatest concentration of private colleges than anywhere else in the world.”

Manager 5

“... we have possibly two or three main competitors, other than the University of Cyprus, so we need to be constantly regenerating ourselves in order to maintain our leading position in the market.”

Manager 1

“... in the wider environment the fact is there are so many other smaller colleges floating around ...”

Manager 3

6.5.4 Culture

In all the interviews carried out, culture has been viewed as a fundamental and major issue in the change process, and linked closely to the business aspects of the college and the way in which it has evolved over the past twenty-six years. Some discussion has centred on the type of organisation that Intercollege has become and how it may have to alter if university status is to be secured.

“Charismatic organisations fail if they are not able to go beyond the point where they are currently. Yes, entrepreneurial attitudes ... these things are wonderful, but at a certain level ... in order to get to the next level – in this case university status – if we do not change mentality we will fail. This is the classic model of failure in charismatic organisations. What do I mean by that? Well, you know we have to start implementing what we claim we do.”

Manager 3

“It’s all part of the culture. Had it been not-for-profit, perhaps it would have been different.”

Manager 1

“Again, looking at the twenty-six year old history of Intercollege, sure from where they were in 1980 and where they are in 2006, no question, I mean incredible steps. But I keep coming back to the fact that charismatic leaders and charismatic organisations reach a certain level of success, and to continue on that path they need to undergo a change. If they are unwilling to do it they will refer back to patterns that will be unhelpful.”

Manager 3

There was a sense that cultural change had taken place but that it may need to be put into action more effectively.

“We started to change the culture in 2000-2001 for the simple reason that was the time the government announced the possibility of becoming a university.”

Manager 4

“... I had the impression that since I wanted openness, transparency and the readiness to change myself, and since I thought I was giving that example in the council, I expected the department heads to take that mentality back to their departments, but lately, meaning the past year, I realised it wasn’t like that.”

Manager 4

“It’s going to be a total cultural change that needs to take place so that people who are authorised to carry out the change and implement the functions that they have, feel that they have the authority to do it and the responsibility that comes with it. We are not at that stage.”

Manager 3

“... the question is again how you bring about cultural change because if they [senior managers] are set in the way they are doing things it’s not going to change.”

Manager 3

“This cultural change and the fear created by change, has to go from the top to the bottom ...”

Manager 3

“... what that means among other things is some big differences in personnel and culture.”

Manager 2

Furthermore, it has been appreciated that academics who were now managers of academics would need to be aware of their cultural effectiveness in the institution, which also reflected the views from the UK research in many ways.

“With the academics I think, believe, that it’s got quite a lot to do with creating the right culture.”

Manager 5

“... from my own position the culture is ... sometimes we appoint faculty or introduce new programmes without consideration of the support that is needed, and we find we have a problem, then we try to deal with it.”

Manager 5

“This [culture] becomes more important with academics because they have to function [within it] and complete their responsibilities, because a lot of what academics do you cannot control as if they were administrators.”

Manager 5

“I think I have [seen cultural change] in one or two areas. One is a consistent tendency for decisions to be made on more academic criteria, and for this to be accepted, the search for an academic solution to a problem. This is becoming more and more firmly entrenched.”

Manager 2

“I think what we should aim at is a much more everyday academic culture. We should give tremendous incentive towards academic work.”

Manager 2

6.5.5 Change Process and Tensions

There was some evidence to suggest that the change process had been implemented through the adoption of a strategic plan that had been the basis of the submission to the government and that this had taken account of the external and internal environments. It was mentioned by some that there was a sign that change had occurred by involving more people in the process, and that the college had been perceived wise to implement certain changes when it had.

“... Intercollege had actually forecast what the law provides, I think very intelligently by forecasting that what the law would provide would be quite similar to the University of Cyprus.”

Manager 2

“But, what I think also is that we have [known] from the beginning, and this has been the approach from top management, that the process of change is participatory. Things have been explained to people.”

Manager 5

“A number of changes have already been introduced and have been in operation for three to four years. In a sense this is also indicative of how the top management functions proactively in that these have been anticipated.”

Manager 5

“... for me it is a continuous process [change] and it never stops. That is why again ... why I would hate to use the expression, this is how we were before and the day we become a university it will change.”

Manager 4

“So basically what I am saying is that change is not going to come now, change has been here for the last four, five or six years.”

Manager 4

“... it's only logical [that] universities have, over the years, been changing and I expect it will happen with us.”

Manager 4

6.6 Summary

In comparing and contrasting the themes from the UK and Cyprus there are many aspects of substance, context, stewardship and overlapping elements that are the same or similar in nature, although in the case of Intercollege these may be

embedded with other elements. This is evident in the theme of massification which is clearly a concept particular to the UK. At Intercollege this is reflected in recruitment and growth that needs to be achieved in order to guarantee its survival. This is evidenced in the growth that the institution has achieved over the past twenty-six years, from six students to over five thousand in 2006.

Table 6.1 below identifies the areas of comparability between the UK and Intercollege outcomes.

Table 6.1: Comparability of Themes

Themes	UK	Cyprus
<i>Substance:</i>		
Status	X	X
Reputation	X	X
Massification	X	N/A
<i>Context:</i>		
Market Needs and Segments	X	X
Organisational Structure	X	X
<i>Stewardship:</i>		
Management Practices	X	X
Managers as Change Agents	X	X
Leadership	X	0
Communication	X	X
Academic Perspective	X	X
Action Learning	X	0
<i>Overlap:</i>		
Customers	X	X
Recruitment and Growth	X	X
Competition	X	X
Cultural Change	X	X
Change Process and Tensions	X	X

Although leadership and action learning are outcomes in both research situations there is considerable disparity as to what is actually understood in each of these environments. As an example in the UK outcomes the two themes are seen as interrelated and an essential element in the change manager's role:

“... we are developing their managerial [change agents] capability through the involvement in leadership programmes and action learning sets, and by ensuring that they can make the decisions that they need to make in order for the schools to develop.”

University D Interview I

“... staff briefing both by myself, the deans and the team of fifty who would act as the change agents and be the facilitators in an action learning role, in order to ensure that there was no complacency. The challenge is to maintain that motivation and to raise the game.”

University E Interview I

“I am currently involved in delivering a leadership development programme to the university executive team ... and initially my role is to act as a facilitator in an action learning environment.”

University D Interview 2

At Intercollege, however, the concepts are not seen in the same way. Leadership is concerned mainly with style:

“I think it is [leadership style] ... that is going to change ...”

Manager 5

“... now in some cases there is not very good follow-up. But that depends on the leadership of the department and the people involved.”

Manager 4

Action learning is viewed as the formation of committees rather than the building of a reflectionist action model:

“I know what you mean in ... where I was, we were to build a new building and the plans were circulated to all faculties, and a committee was established that addressed their concerns.”

Manager 1

“We have been doing that all the time in a sense, we don’t call it action learning, but it’s very much like that. As long as I can remember, including regular committees and one key person from each area, we regularly go to retreats. Here we discuss the development of the college. For example, the last couple of years it has been about university status. We go there prepared with documents. We discuss extensively. We appoint other committees to study things and come back to another session and bring back ideas and so on.”

Manager 4

In considering the outcomes there are issues of concern at Intercollece that need addressing, i.e. communication but these can be examined within the context of leadership.

As such, the overriding need for Intercollege is the leadership development programme undertaken through the application of action research techniques and delivered through action learning integrated into and across the organisation.

As highlighted in the literature review and research evidence, leadership is crucial for the survival of an organisation – that leaders undertake the role of change agents, and that all leaders must develop an understanding, coupled with considerable skills, to foster the creation and management of change. From the UK evidence, change is seen as the responsibility of leadership, whereby teams are able to generate highly focused behaviour and commitment in order to cope with inevitable barriers (see section 6.4.1 p. 143, Management Practices). As an agent for change, action learning builds leaders to effect this change. From the conditions which are created in action learning ‘sets’, managers learn by experience from their own real-life problems, thus accepting help and helping others in similar or dissimilar situations (Marquardt, 2000). The focus is centred on learning about the process of managing change by actually undertaking organisational change. A model should incorporate what Mumford (1995) believes is the effective training of managers:

- The ability to learn to take effective action, becoming better in diagnosing and analysing information
- Actually taking effective action and not mere recommendation
- Working on a meaningful project so as to learn through solving the problems encountered
- The sharing of experiences bound in reality and learning from each other's insights

In this way, due to its flexibility and adaptiveness, action learning can be effective in developing leaders. The process builds on the experiences and independence of people and responds to everyday issues.

During the interview process, in both countries, the author observed that the interviewees were at ease when they were considering their own areas of expertise. The senior managers are, however, one of the most challenging groups to lend support in personal development. Their knowledge and experience is widely varied and in this environment they are self-starters and almost always work under extreme pressure. Usually they are highly critical of development activities that do not show an immediate payback, both in financial terms and in addressing the current problem. Their time is precious, their responsibilities onerous and their patience is often stretched. Yet, from the author's observation during the research interviews, individuals within this group, especially those new to a senior management role, can often feel isolated and insecure faced with the high levels of responsibility they carry and with such prominent visibility.

“... the kind of line management sort of thing, you know concepts of managerial concepts I don't really feel comfortable with them...”

University D Interview 3

Action learning in the UK setting was used as an important method to enact change with the deans acting as facilitators. Yet it can be extremely difficult to share these feelings with close colleagues as is expected in an action learning process. It is therefore necessary, as Revans (1982) has postulated, to ground the learning process in the realities of daily management.

6.7 Conclusion

A crucial element in the outcomes of this research is a cultural change process whereby value and belief systems are altered in order to ensure that the organisation continues to build on its success. Leaders, according to Kanter (1985), are of vital importance in the role as change agents. She believes that leaders must develop an understanding along with high degrees of competence in managing change so that their organisations can survive. Since change is a function of leadership (Marquardt, 2000), it is necessary to deal effectively with any barriers to change in order to create behaviour in managers that is conducive to overcoming them.

Action learning has, therefore, the capability to build leaders to become change agents and inspire members, through an evolutionary progression, to view and understand the changes that are happening within themselves (McNulty & Canty, 1995). This supports the assertion by Revans (1980) that the system cannot be changed without the individual being changed in the process. As such, the change in the system can be assumed to be the 'action', and the change that takes place within the individual is actual 'learning' – so that learning is also learning to learn effectively (Marquardt, 2000).

In order to develop the managerial skills of problem-solving and personal development it is necessary to set the issues in the reality of the working environment. In action learning sets, managers present their actions to the constructive scrutiny of their colleagues and through this reflective process they are able to understand what they say and do. Action learning creates conditions whereby managers learn from their own experiences in facing real-life problems, and which they are assisted in resolving through interaction with their colleagues. This consequently enables the managers to change their way of management based on reality. As Marquardt suggests:

“The focus of action learning is on learning about the process of managing change by actually managing an organizational change”
(2000, p. 238).

This process is about self learning and the importance that managers place on their attitudes and assumptions as to how they lead and make decisions.

As Friedman and Antal (2005) indicate, this reality has resonance within an organisation faced with interaction in a number of environments which incorporate all of the issues raised in this research – especially the many different ways of 'perceiving reality'. According to these authors, and supported by Gregersen et al., 1998, the need to develop intercultural skills and knowledge has taken on significantly greater importance. As the research highlights, it is essential across the institution's environments to develop a model that recognises the ability to understand cultural differences as a resource for effective action.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusions and Recommendations

From the outcomes of the research in the UK and Cyprus there appears to be a need for clear guidance on leadership skills.

Today, the workforce is more knowledgeable and more skilled and demands a more sophisticated style of leadership. The rapid pace of change in the economy also places new demands on leaders who must gather information and be equipped to conclude decisions quickly. They must also provide employees with the resources and the freedom to solve problems and exploit opportunities as they arise. During this change of status phase, leadership is especially important for Intercollege, and management should keep the institution and stakeholders, especially employees, focused on its mission as the forthcoming changes are likely to be demanding on the organisational structure.

To enable the college to continue to grow to best effect the current charismatic/transactional leadership ought to move towards a transformational method. The institution's vision of maintaining its leading and entrepreneurial position in the market has to be relayed to its employees, thereby resulting in shared values, better communication and delivery of best quality. By utilising the McRoy and Gibbs (2003) model the institution's inner context can be described as shifting from that of entrepreneurs to a leadership team-based management style. It is vital that employees master the art of taking decisions on their own, and that the manager learns to delegate both the authority, and the information to facilitate the creation of a participative leadership style. The major challenge is to overcome old charismatic traditional leadership styles and implement leadership at all levels.

7.1 Recommendations for Action

The management has to change its charismatic/transactional leadership style into a more transformational style. This may be achieved by further defining the vision in respect of its leadership performance as a team leader. The existing style ought to be altered and leaders should

- be attentive to individual differences of employees
- create intellectual stimulation which encourages followers to understand their own beliefs and values
- be helped in their analysis of problems and finding creative solutions
- enable others to act
- model the way
- inspire a shared vision

Perhaps the most appropriate form of leadership development and creative problem-solving in this institution might be a formal programme of action learning. This requires the learner to consider problems for which there are no obvious solutions but which could be resolved using prior experience. The author suggests that he should act as facilitator in the action learning process, combined with formal management training and learning from experience. As such the teams are more likely to develop cognitive and interpersonal skills, as part of the new leadership style within the challenging project of developing university status.

7.1.1 Action Learning

Action learning is a development opportunity whereby time is given to focus on what is important to the organisation. From the UK findings this was an important management development tool, but in Cyprus this is not used as a method to inculcate leadership skills in senior managers. It might be leadership, creative problem solving, strategic management, career planning or managing change. The focus might be centred on individual professional development or organisational development. To facilitate this process, a meeting is proposed between a group of peers who come from a variety of professional backgrounds and who work in different parts of the institution. What they have in common is a

need for structured time to reflect and to share learning. Once a decision has been taken to use this process, then the participants are placed in an action learning set.

What actually happens in an action learning set?

A group of about six people working in related fields and at comparable levels of management responsibility, meet regularly for a contracted number of meetings, which is usually five, over a twelve to eighteen month period. Initially they work with an external facilitator who acts as catalyst and coordinator, supporting them throughout the process.

At each meeting there is a disciplined process:

- every set member reports briefly on what has been happening
- set members decide who is going to present a particular situation that they currently face
- the presenter talks, for as long as he/she wishes, and describes their situation/dilemma/challenge
- the set members ask questions which are designed to assist the presenter to come to a deeper understanding
- set members do not give advice, tell anecdotes, pass judgement, or talk about how it compares to their own situation
- the set assists the presenter to review options and decide on action
- the set reflects on the group process and gives feedback to each other on what has taken place
- at a future set meeting, the presenter reports on the action taken

The facilitator:

- enables the group to reflect on group processes
- creates safety for individual members to explore sensitive issues
- takes the group beyond superficial analysis
- keeps the group focused on the individual presenter
- ensures that group members follow action learning conventions
- enables the group to draw out general lessons on management development

Action learning can provide development that goes beyond the standard training programme. Creating a network of learning sets is a powerful way of encouraging self-managed learning across the institution.

Action learning sets can meet for a series of whole or half day sessions at regular intervals, over a six to twelve month period. During the sessions individual set members identify particular areas of development within the leadership and creative problem-solving areas that they wish to work on during the lifetime of the set. Participants may be peers across the institution who would like to have an opportunity to share their learning and exchange best practice. Alternatively, participants may be staff members who are assigned together to work on the change programme. Action learning is likely to help them work more effectively together.

The action learning set affords members the time to problem solve, plan together and develop strategies for overcoming organisational constraints. Participants are given a development opportunity which enables them to support each other in their work and to challenge each other on how best to achieve their goals.

It is proposed that action learning be used for the management development programme of leadership and creative problem-solving in order to achieve a successful outcome during the transformation from college to university status. This would allow individuals to focus on the transfer of learning to the live challenges of the change process. To facilitate this process through action learning, it is proposed to introduce a course to inculcate leadership development.

7.2 Praxis of Leadership

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

In improving the individual's own performance through leadership development this is then likely to translate into improvements in organisational performance (Donnelly et al., 2000). Although it is difficult to prove or generalise, it is clear that leadership, culture and performance are closely related.

From the research discussion, it would appear that it is difficult to become a successful change agent without being an effective leader; as Kotter (1995) indicates, successful leaders are successful change agents. This is confirmed in practice in the UK but not in the literature for education. In recent decades leadership, although continuously practised, has been perceived unfashionable. Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff (1991) reasoned that this was because people associated leaders with the abuse of power by politicians or perhaps generals on the battlefield.

It needs to be recognised that good leadership is very personal, and putting it into practice usually involves making decisions, employing creative problem-solving skills and taking a particular ethical course of action.

Aim of Proposed Course

The aim of the proposed course is to improve the individual's understanding and appreciation of leadership. There are three conceptual elements to include in the course to achieve this aim:

- Individual leadership
- Leadership theories and
- Leadership in organisations

The course should expose the members to a range of leadership theories and ideas, some of which may be disagreed with. As managers in the organisation, it will always be necessary to face leadership challenges and the theories and analogies used in the course would be there to help the individual understand and make sense of them.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, it is expected that the individual manager should be able to:

- Understand different leadership theories, frameworks, and influences
- Link leadership to organisations, cultures, situations
- Examine leadership characteristics critically
- Merge theory into practice in the context of the organisation

- Think more deeply about their own individual leadership approach through the application of action learning techniques

It is necessary for the individual to question their thinking, reflect on their own situation, and then implement what is correct in their own situation. The one thing that is certain is that there are no right answers and members have to be prepared to be adaptive. As Charles Darwin noted, the species that survived were not the most intelligent, they were the most adaptable to change. Leadership is not about intelligence, although mental agility is desirable. It is more about capability, attitude, behaviour and skill.

The course proposed would consist of the following sessions:

- Leadership theory: developing conceptual knowledge
- Applying theory to practice
- Developing personal leadership
- Leadership in action

7.2.1 Leadership Theory: Developing Conceptual Knowledge

This session is designed to embed some understanding of leadership concepts, with a perception of how they have been derived over time. In practical terms, this session is intended to provide some basic scaffolding enabling the individual to explore the meaning fully, in the direction that interests them. The underlying objective is to make managers more knowledgeable about leadership and to dispel fear. The more knowledgeable we are on a subject the less fearful we are, and better equipped to cope with unexpected situations. Leadership is often about handling the unexpected. The information presented should hopefully, generate ideas, and in questioning and reflecting on individuals' experiences this ought to develop knowledge and capability.

The session would be focused at the team: leading a group, the operational levels of leadership, and leading a number of groups.

Leadership is dependent on the individuals as well as the situation in which they operate their style and the culture and environment. It is important that the individual manager searches for the 'answer' that makes sense to him/her and consequently delivers results.

Overview of the Session

This session concentrates on the environment in which leadership is practised. Any concerns would be addressed regarding the definitions of leaders and managers and the core of the session then related to the development of leadership thinking. The aim would be to tease out various models and ideas in order to assist with the practice of leadership, which in turn would create a framework to understand leadership better. Other associated variables should be considered, such as, age, gender and ethics that influence leadership. It is proposed that throughout, the focus should be on team and operational levels of leadership.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

- Understand the development of leadership thinking
- Use frameworks and models to understand better the application of leadership
- Examine critically leadership characteristics and identify some of the factors that impact on leadership
- Think more deeply and reflect on own leadership philosophy

The main topic headings would be:

- Environmental factors
- Organisational culture
- Leaders or managers
- Leadership thinking
- Empowerment
- Significant variables

7.2.2 Applying Theory to Practice

Overview of the Session

A case study approach may be used to develop this session, which should examine how inspiring leadership contributed to the success of the case in question. This could translate into deciding whether a particular approach is appropriate in the manager's individual context. The participants would be encouraged to analyse the case, applying leadership theories and models already presented. It is an essential element to consider and reflect on the relevance of the learning to the individual's personal style of leadership.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

- Analyse and assess the leadership skills and behaviours demonstrated by an inspiring 20th century leader in difficult circumstances
- Consider the relevance of the models of leadership in analysing the case
- Draw on the case study to consider effective ways of behaving as a leader in difficult situations
- Improve their skills in noticing subtle factors that influence leadership, such as: the impact of communication through tone, body language and the particular words used
- Reflect on an approach to leadership and the lessons that can be drawn for their own personal leadership style

The main topic headings would be:

- The case study
- Applying leadership models
- In practice the models
- Leadership lessons to be learned

7.2.3 Developing Personal Leadership

Overview of the Session

This session would review the research on the competencies required for leadership positions and consider the relevant leadership style to meet the

environment in which the individual operates. It may, at this stage, be helpful to employ a leadership development questionnaire to consider ways in which the individual can develop his/her own leadership style based on their own environment.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, the participants should be able to:

- Understand and discuss leadership competencies
- Distinguish between leadership styles appropriate for different environments
- Take action to develop an appropriate leadership style

The main topic headings will be:

- Leadership models
- Leadership and emotional intelligence
- What makes a successful leader
- The dimensions of leadership
- Leadership style and organisational context
- Development of an individual leadership style

7.2.4 Leadership in Action

Overview of the Session

This session would concentrate on what lessons can be learnt in leading for outstanding performance. Further case study material could be used to support the learning and emphasis given as to how a team can be managed and led, the use of emotional intelligence behaviours, the leadership style and the way the manager can lead and build a team.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, the participants should be able to:

- Identify skills and attributes needed for leadership in turbulent times
- Examine the impact of emotional intelligence on performance
- Describe how a leader can create the correct environment in which to work

CHAPTER 8

Reflections

8.1 Final Comments

The complex structure and competing professional and economic factors that characterise educational institutions will always cause problems for those with the duty to manage them. This is especially so when unprecedented developments force managers to revise their approach to their roles and instigate change. In such circumstances external environmental pressures are at work producing challenges which require an innovatory response and a shift in attitudes in change management situations. Human expertise is essential to any organisation and consequently positive leadership and management needs to be engendered throughout the whole institution, not simply with senior managers.

The research has deliberated an analysis of the academic profession, particularly the changing external environment of cultures, structures and the role that manager academics play in a particular change situation. Those interviewed in the UK higher education system perceived change to be managed in a consistent way with ideas about how to improve and streamline efficiency, performance monitoring, target setting and private-sector-models of running institutions. Significant changes to the environment of universities, judged to encourage increased management, were the massification of student intake, a decline in the unit of resource for teaching and the rise of quality assessment for teaching and research. There was evidence of strategic and cultural change with emphasis being placed on cost centres, and there was some evidence of decentralisation, including devolved budgets. Devolution was nevertheless only partially realised with financial power, especially with autonomy in areas where the employment of new faculty and staff remained under the control of administrators at the centre of the organisation.

Most of those interviewed were positive about the effects of change on their roles and management practices. They also discussed the types of learning they had engaged in and the support they had received to develop their management roles as well as specifying what kinds of management approaches they believed would be effective with academics. As might be expected the continued importance of teaching and research was plain to see.

There was verification of the concept of a learning organisation model in which prominence was placed on cultural change, teamwork, empowerment and strategic scanning of the organisation. All of the universities reported on positive cultural change initiatives within existing organisational units.

Each manager saw himself/herself as change agents but there were issues surrounding the amount of time they had to think, reflect and plan. This might have been due to the long hours expected of managers involved in overseeing operations. Academic autonomy remains largely intact although there have been changes to academic working conditions. In line with most knowledge-based occupations, academic work is creative, and managers use persuasion as a tool in managing academics and this seems to be the most workable method. It was felt that by motivating academics to change 'carrots' works rather better than 'sticks', so persuasion takes up a great deal of the manager academics time.

Cultural variations between each institution appeared stronger than had been imagined. Institutional history perceived that niche and mission, and absolute size were the key factors. They had all invested in some form of management development, i.e. leadership, using action learning, with the deans acting as facilitators, and there was tangible proof to suggest that this was a successful and enjoyable model of addressing issues.

Much of the above was identified in the outcomes from the Intercollege study but there was more evidence to indicate that the change of status was a first priority and this had to be expected. There are, however, parallels that can be made with special emphasis on the external environment and how manager academics view their new role within the structure. Intercollege is just embarking on the bid to

become a university, but in spite of the fact that the structure and procedures have been in place for several years, reflecting on the experiences encountered by managers in the UK may prove invaluable during this important transitional period. It is a cause for concern that managers are in place and that devolution of responsibility will occur, but there has been no formal development, hence the recommendation to incorporate a programme that will enable managers at all levels to undertake their duties more effectively.

8.2 Learning

From the author's perspective it has been interesting to observe how the original thoughts have been modified during the research. At first it was assumed that change was such a common feature in business that it would be a relatively straightforward process in education. This has proven not to be the case, the external environment in which universities exist is much more complicated, and the internal environment is equally complex with a diversity of expectations at all levels in the institutions studied. The transition period for Intercollege is more than likely to be equally complicated and diverse in nature. The author has developed further skills in methodology, and searching through large quantities of reference material in order to develop, hopefully, a coherent and logical process that will be of practical use in the development of Intercollege's future institutional status.

8.3 Future Research Topics

The areas for future research that may be considered are twofold:

- i.* Action learning, which for Intercollege would be a step forward in its development of teams. Some work has already been undertaken in universities in the UK and during the process of researching this project, contact has been made with several universities, other than those covered by this research, and it would appear that some type of collaborative project may be worth considering.
- ii.* How university status will affect Intercollege's position in the wider environment and whether there is potential for academic 'drift' as seems to have occurred in many of the post-1992 institutions in the UK.

Appendix I

Questions to be addressed with UK University Senior Managers

1. How well do you feel that HE is able to respond to social, economic and political needs with speed, efficiency, effectiveness and quality?
2. What structural changes has the university undertaken to produce strategic success through the development of its resources, routines, practices and core competencies?
3. In considering change management decisions how is your direction influenced by government policies?
4. How do you feel that academics, who hold managerial positions, deal with the multiplicity of differentiated but interrelated management tasks in the change process?
5. Would you consider that in HE there is an unequal distribution of power between stakeholders, within and between system levels who are nevertheless interdependent especially during periods of change. Since HE has a multitude of stakeholders with an extensive range of specialist knowledge and priorities, how do you deal in the change process with the concept of academic freedom?
6. How do you go about shifting changes in beliefs and values in order to use this movement as a 'springboard' for other planned changes to structures and systems?
7. What enables and blocks your change efforts?
8. How are the decisions made and implemented regarding change?
9. Who implements them – change agents – how selected?
10. Since change is complex and generally does not follow the intended plan, how do you deal with the evolving profile of change?
11. If you had absolute power to change the institution – what would it be?

Appendix II

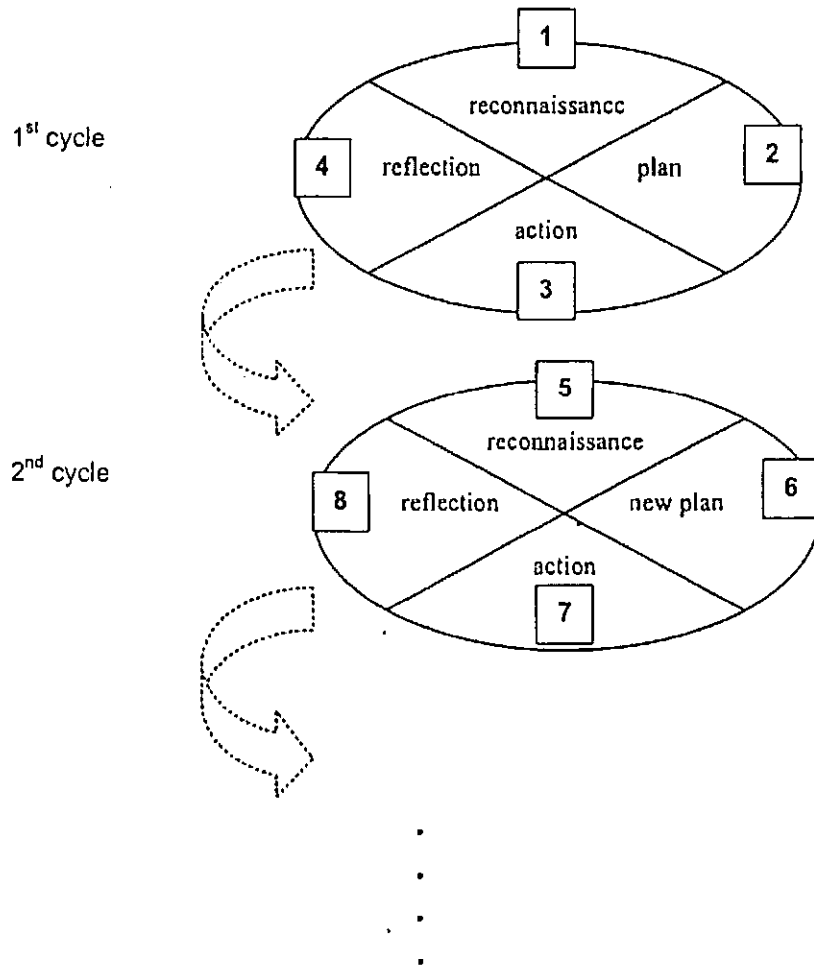
Questions to be addressed with Intercollege Senior Managers

In researching change management in UK universities, especially during the crucial stages of transition from a college to university status or during the process of merger, a model has emerged that indicates issues surrounding management development.

It is then necessary to ascertain if during Intercollege's transition these same aspects will have an effect in ensuring the change process is effectively and efficiently implemented.

The following questions emerge as elements that need to be discussed not just from your area of responsibility but broadly across the institution:

1. What actions do you think can bring about successful change concerning the transition from college to university status?
2. In considering these issues in the UK, change is seen as the responsibility of leadership so as to generate focused behaviour and commitment. What instruments, i.e. vision/mission roadmaps, do you see as being useful for the leadership to use to lead?
3. Action learning (see model overleaf) is used to develop the managerial skills of problem solving and personal development to set the issues in the reality of the working environment. In action learning 'sets' managers present their actions to the constructive scrutiny of their colleagues and through this process of reflection they are able to understand what they say and do. What value, or otherwise, do you think this process would have in the development of managers at Intercollege?
 1. Reconnaissance. This is the start of the process and is concerned with understanding the problem and its complexity and is generally exploratory in stance.
 2. Plan. Within this stage plans are developed for an intervention strategy.
 3. Action. Following discussion and negotiation with the contributory participants the intervention is undertaken.
 4. Reflection and revision. A process of evaluating the intervention strategy coupled with a re-evaluation of the initial problem is undertaken.



4. Outcomes from action learning are the essential elements of 'action' and 'learning'. In your role, how could you ensure that this could be linked back to determine if the overall vision/mission of the university remains in alignment?

Appendix III

Research Papers

1. McRoy, I. & Gibbs, P. (2003). 'An institution in change: A private institution in transition', The International Journal of Educational Management, 17(4), pp. 147-154.
2. Gibbs, P. & McRoy, I. (2006). 'Dwelling at work: A place where vocation and identity could grow?', Journal of Further and Higher Education, 30(3), pp. 283-293.
3. McRoy, I. & Gibbs, P. 'Leading change in higher education', The International Journal of Educational Management. Submitted for peer review, October 2006.

An institution in change: a private institution in transition

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Keywords

Change, Agents, Private sector, Higher education, Cyprus, United Kingdom

Abstract

This paper considers the issues facing an institution as it confronts the transition from college to university. Utilizing insights from the UK experience of polytechnics moving to university status the authors seek similarity and a direction of action for a Cypriot Higher Education College. Based on interviews and focus groups a proposed model for managing change in educational institutions undergoing this transition is offered.

Introduction

The current structure of higher education is summarized in the government booklet, *Higher Education in Cyprus* (Republic of Cyprus, 2000). The central role is given to the Department of Higher and Tertiary Education within the Ministry of Education and Culture. This department covers registration; supervision and accreditation of all the private institutions and certain aspects of the University of Cyprus[1]; and, in association with appropriate other ministries, the seven public institutions of non-university higher education. This structure, however, is radically changing in preparation for Cyprus's accession to the EU. Already two new universities – a technical and an open university – have been approved by the government and accreditation criteria have been devised to turn some of the existing private institutions into universities. The Greek Cypriot desire for higher education seems to be as much driven by intrinsic desires for higher studies as well as an instrumentality of employability (Menon, 1997). This has led to a mismatch of graduate skills with labour needs resulting in an over-supply of graduates. This is partially relevant given the over-supply of graduates[2].

Background – the Cypriot situation

Cypriots like or at least attend higher education. The demand for higher education has risen considerably over the last 20 years and at present over 60 per cent of all secondary school leavers continues in post-secondary education (Department of Statistics and Research, 1999). This figure is based on a 130 per cent[3] increase in student numbers in tertiary education from 1970-1971

to 1998-1999. This demand has led to the development of an effective private sector which, since the 1970s, has had more students than the public sector's mainly vocational provision (Koyzis, 1989). This influenced special measures to be introduced in 1987 to accredit private institutions, which eventually ensured the recognition of higher education programmes by the Government of Cyprus. The number of places offered by the University of Cyprus and the public tertiary education institutions of Cyprus and the technological education institutes of Greece has increased in line with qualified demand maintaining an access of supply. Indeed, the three major private colleges in Cyprus have each experienced increased numbers as the government legitimizes them by offering grants to students on their recognized programmes. (We will not be making the case for private versus public institutions in this paper but we follow Zumata's (1992) assessment that nonprofit higher education "is valuable to the nation" when referring to the USA.)

Cypriots have had to, and many still do, travel far to have access to higher education and to contextualize their learning in an international environment. The trends in distribution of students in Cypriot institutions compared to overseas has changed with rapid domestic growth between 1980-1981 and 1990-1991 with corresponding numbers dropping in foreign universities and a reversal in this trend since 1996-1997. (Where the drop seems particularly dramatic is in the number going to Greek universities – down from 13 per cent between 1999 and 2000 to only 3 per cent during 2001.) The main beneficiary of Cypriots studying abroad is the UK, with demand in the USA static and other destinations declining. The most popular discipline of study is Business



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Administration, with Engineering, Medicine and Social Studies the next most popular.

Europe as the catalyst of change

The policy toward higher education seems to be a hybrid of market intervention in terms of quality control and accreditation, plus positive support to public institutions in the market. This leaves the private colleges to fight for market share in a biased market where support from the government confers status on an institution. The "peculiarity" of the Cyprus structure is in the lack of cohesion of the Cypriot higher education's offering to domestic and foreign students that run contrary to the developments in France, the UK, Germany and many other EU member states that have recognized the importance of competitive positioning of their national education systems. Indeed Hang and Tauch (2001) have noted:

... the issue of competitiveness is seen as an important priority for an amazingly high number of countries.

As Koyzis (1997) indicates, European accession and the inevitable harmonizing within the European *aquis communautaire* will mean that the higher education sector will have to examine these realities, which may result in repositioning the role of the republic and the private providers. The prevailing argument is that higher education should be allowed to develop along the lines of free market pressures, which embraces the private, as well as the public sector providers of higher education (although there is opposition by those in significant positions of authority). This poses a dilemma for those private organizations that want to pursue university status, for they need the legitimacy of university status to compete both internally and internationally. This creates real managerial issues for these colleges and we examine how to manage these diverse, unclear and complex drivers of change in an institutional preparedness for the transition from college to university.

Change in education

Limited research has been carried out in this particular sphere of change from college to university status (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993; Schmoker and Wilson, 1993; Short and Greer, 1997; Squires *et al.*, 1984; Weller, 1996; Weller and Hartley, 1994). Educational change, according to Senge (1990), lies within the process of education in that many faculty work in isolation, within a classroom and

departmental environment. Together with the number of changes in curriculum design, assessment procedures and grading systems that have been introduced over the last decade cause faculty to be distrustful of yet another change process being claimed to satisfy all the stakeholders' needs. However, the application of more managerial methods of change management (Davies and Ellison, 1997) points to educational managers vision to be able to design an organizational structure that has the necessary in-built processes to deliver these requirements and determine the role of individuals to meet obligations. Accordingly, managers will need to rethink both the role of the supplier and of the client for these new services. This will mean identifying who really is the core customer and implementing a delivery system to meet their needs and expectations (Applebaum *et al.*, 1998). Davies and Ellison (1997) further indicate that students choose services, which afford better information, possess a reputation for quality, and institutions thus structured are best suited to remain in business. Therefore, to identify core customers is imperative for economic survival. The redesign or reengineering of curriculum delivery systems may also be necessary if higher education is to increase quality outputs while reducing overall costs, which will be essential if the number of students is to increase.

This external environmental background has a number of critical implications for education, especially in a marketplace in Cyprus (Pashlardis, 1996), with considerable competition. Organizational managers will need to concentrate on engendering critical and high quality thinking skills underpinned with the ability to use the latest technology, together with the development of teams who will be able to adapt quickly to the marketplace and design learning strategies that give rise to problem solving and decision making. The approach may need to be holistic rather than simply incremental in nature. In order to ensure that all employees are involved in the process, those responsible for curriculum development will need creative methods to implement this new approach to teaching and learning[4].

Research methodology

The research methodology employed was an analysis of primary data, applying semi-structured discussions with the senior management team of the college plus telephone interviews with leaders in UK higher education institutions, who were

active during the 1989 and 1992 educational reforms, referred to as the reference panel. In particular, those involved were members of senior management from polytechnics, which evolved from the binary system of education into autonomous universities during that period.

A focus group of college staff was interviewed to seek an understanding and a language of the college's main issues that might concern them in any forthcoming change of status. The results of the focus group were used as a basis for developing and applying the semi-structured interviews with the senior management team of the college. This group represented a broad range of managers, with various levels of influence. It varied from those with a majority shareholding to those with senior and middle management responsibilities, coupled with varying years of service with the college, from its earliest development to most recently appointed academic managers. The group consisted of 20 people.

Contiguous with the interviews at the college, ten former UK polytechnics that had made the successful transition from polytechnic status to university were identified. Their success was based on examination of their growth in terms of student numbers, which may reflect the possible growth potential of a college if university status is granted. Each participating university vice-chancellor received, electronically, an outline of the content to be discussed and asking for an individual to be nominated who was part of the team at the time of the UK transition. The guidance note included the areas for discussion and requested a time when telephone conversations could take place to consider these issues. Each university nominated a person who was subsequently interviewed on the telephone and although a significant limitation to this approach was the fact that more than ten years had elapsed since the changes in the UK were enacted the commonality of view from the respondents acted as a validity check.

Lessons from the UK

1. Change processes – strategic vision and staff involvement

The strategic plan was a catalyst in this process (Tsiakkos and Pashiardis, 2002). Critical, however, was the communication with existing and future employees as an essential component in the change process. There were many meetings during this time concerned with strategic development,

promotional activity and image making. These tended to take the form of communication via the vice-chancellor's team through various means, i.e. large group sessions and brainstorming meetings with schools about the overall strategic direction intended. Team leaders (normally heads of department) were used to develop the strategic objectives, targets and direction within their own functional areas, to ultimately fit within the overall plan. The HEFC played a significant role in planning since it set down guidelines that required a five-year rolling strategic plan to cover all the main functional areas. However, essentially, it was a "bottom-up" approach that most employees were able to affect to a larger or lesser degree.

2. Change agents

In none of the discussions with the reference panel were external change agents used. It was felt that although external people may bring some new ideas to the process, the educational function is such a specialised and complex system that the people best suited to the role were those designated from within.

Generally, internal change agents were selected for their knowledge of the organisation and their personality, together with their commitment to the change process and their ability to communicate, discuss and resolve issues that may arise. They also needed sufficient managerial authority to be able to make decisions in the process of consultation and to convince sophisticated individuals that the transition would have a beneficial effect. Most of those who acted as change agents came from academic backgrounds. As such, their academic primary function was discipline centred, but as a change agent this became of secondary importance. Therefore, it was considered important that those who undertook this role eventually viewed the organization from a new perspective, and were encouraged to act as role models in the process. The ability to identify the key people who were able to influence the process was seen as crucial and to be able to negotiate with them was essential.

3. Culture and morale

The change process was considered by many managers to alter the ethos of the organization in order to make it more competitive under the new conditions, and to achieve this, a fundamental change to senior and middle management structures had to be made.

There were deep anxieties among faculty and staff about external threats and uncertainties with regard to a new managerial regime. However, the sector had already been innovative in its response to the lack of resources when they were polytechnics and there was considerable evidence of job satisfaction and corporate loyalty.

It was reported that there has been a move away from closed and hierarchical structures towards open and participative ones in which team working is the norm. Responsibility for part of the planning process was passed on to the departmental teams who decided on the objectives and targets, which gave them the freedom to develop their programmes within the overall strategic plan. In doing so, a culture has evolved whereby leaders ensure that hard questions are asked of the stakeholders, resulting in their views being taken seriously and thus improving the long-term morale of employees.

The roles of all the players have changed. For senior managers this has meant interpreting the needs of the external agencies and deciding where to position the organisation as well as deciding what should or should not be implemented. For the organization to function more effectively certain functional groups have developed such as personnel, finance and estates with clear objectives and measurable targets, with less control from the top.

4. Staffing Issues

Essentially, in order to achieve changes at organizational level there was a need to develop a catalyst for change which appealed to reason; provided reassurance that new contracts would not be just a mechanism to increase teaching loads; allocate modest financial inducements and develop the heads of department for broader roles. Contracts of employment caused considerable debate, and in some cases disruption, at the thought of losing some of the rights contained in old agreements.

Within the new contract, for instance, there was a requirement to develop and approve employee appraisal schemes, which was a huge cultural change at the time and there was some resistance. This posed a new tension, especially with faculty, with the manager's perspective of control over the workforce and the teacher's rights of self-determination within their own professional culture. Eventually, a model based on personal development was proposed and in these terms carried no particular threat to employees. Within this, performance related pay (PRP) was generally

thought to be crucial to the development of the human resource in education, especially when considering culture and morale, and in engendering a sense of shared purpose based on open communication. It was considered by those who discussed this issue that, generally, academics were not principally motivated by money, but by the freedom to engage in research, scholarship and teaching in an environment that provides the resources to meet those needs.

However, there has been a loss of trust, especially with the introduction of materialism – often in its crudest terms. The pressure created by falling government funding, the explicit controls of the quality assurance agencies, the new competitive drive of the traditional universities and the pressure on increasing student numbers all continue to leave the sector uncertain of its future.

5. Academic research

As polytechnics, these institutions had been mainly involved in applied research, which carried over into the new university status, but because the funding council initially favoured the traditional universities, the new ones continued with their partnerships with industry and commerce. This anomaly in funding has been perpetuated. However, since the traditional universities still receive the majority of the funding, it was felt that the links with industry were important for the reputation of the university. Most of the research was linked into personal staff development, which was then assessed under the appraisal process. There is no doubt that research, which is linked to a partnership with industry and commerce, certainly enhances an institutions' reputation and is useful in attracting students and faculty to the university. This may be viewed by teaching staff as a threat to those who do not wish to undertake significant research. The above links into the focus group's concerns on the same issue.

Summary of the UK findings

From the interviews there is evidence indicating that the change process is facilitated by using change agents who are committed to the process. They act as role models, possessing a range of communication skills, which they are able to deploy to assist in reducing anxiety and to gain the confidence of those who may be doubting the reasons and motivations of senior managers. In many ways, this supports the evidence contained in the literature review. In the UK,

the change was imposed through government legislation so there was no alternative and this was generally regarded as a positive move. One respondent commented that the polytechnics welcomed the development, having felt for years that their taught programmes were as good as those of universities and that they should be funded, in a similar vein to older establishments. During the move to incorporation there was still a requirement to provide reassurance that there was no "hidden agenda" and that the opportunities outweighed the threats. In the main, this was accepted by all employees. However, one respondent commented that the original fears concerning mergers were now re-emerging and some of the new universities were finding themselves in desperate financial trouble. Two mergers had already taken place.

It was felt that the academics best suited to "champion" the changes were the heads of department but they required guidance as to their role from senior managers. One respondent quoted that it would be foolish to pretend that this was a wholly positive experience. Many colleagues became cynical about their managerial responsibilities, and many academics in particular, resisted change – finding it difficult to accept that they should be managed – as opposed to remaining totally autonomous. As such, some remained tardy, but many, eventually, paid the price and left the sector.

The strategic planning process was seen as less of a problem for the new universities, bearing in mind their previous experiences as polytechnics. The plan, however, was seen as the driving force and a catalyst for change.

Essentially, then, in order to achieve changes, investment in the leadership skills of key players was required in an attempt to change employee's attitudes, beliefs, norms and to reduce fears of uncertainty and anxiety.

The college's position

In the discussions with college management, the main issues that arose clustered around the themes of fear and threats in terms of local and international competition, financial structure, job security and research capability. Although in a different contextual setting many similar issues were apparent within the UK. In the UK, the role of the change agent was seen as significant, and considerable skills were required if the process was to be successful. From the college perspective this may be a problem since there appears to be little thought given

to who will bring about the change and how employees will be encouraged to accept it. Although university status for the college is widely accepted, the anxiety expressed by the focus group is requiring urgent consideration by senior management.

The various communication processes were highlighted in the UK research, together with the use of the strategic plan as a catalyst for change. Alongside this, the development of teams were involved in the planning process and essentially kept informed of overall progress. College senior managers will have to employ various communication techniques and develop trusting relationships with their functional department heads, thus enabling the key people to spread the message and "bring on board" those who feel threatened by the envisaged change. At the same time, the government does not instigate the change in Cyprus and reassurance is needed to attest that the political moves currently being made will bring about the desired benefits to all.

The research discussion has moved into other related areas, presenting the case that no single change agent may be able to bring about the necessary changes. A team may well best be employed to operate as a form of agency, switching and acting like a cast of characters at various times. In the case of the college the concept of learned helplessness has arisen and as an underlying issue may have significant consequences for achieving successful change, and might well be considered as an area for future research for institutions in transition.

An action plan for change

The change of status in the UK was driven by government legislation; in the college's case the desire is self-generated and it is driving the government towards acceptance of university status. However, the senior managers must bring about the employees' awareness of the need to change, while clarifying that the present state is not sustainable, in order for them to relate to the current position, which may seem safe and secure, and move towards the desired direction of change (Van Buren and Werner, 1996). A clear and challenging strategy should be deployed, which allows the formulation of audacious yet realistic goals, thus setting the direction criteria supported in the responses from the UK. Marking a juncture in the future with specific targets that focus on strategic advantages, allows freedom and establishes indicator guidelines that point to the desired direction. Within

this frame, flexibility for individual initiatives and other options should be considered in the light of emerging changes in the environment. This is desirable in the long-term interests of all stakeholders (Vecchio and Applebaum, 1995).

The forces that assist in this process ensure that sufficient authority is delegated, coupled with a believable message delivered at the correct time. The model, therefore, must have an impact with specific awareness-raising sessions, which are also viewed to be relevant, generating credibility, comprehensiveness and strengthening commitment, conviction and developing decisive action (Hitt *et al.*, 1996; Kanter *et al.*, 1992). The action then demands to be linked into empowerment, by removing obstacles such as, the "old ways" of doing things, and converting the attitudes of those with vested interests in the past. The organizational structures need to be re-examined with a view to modifying them should they undermine the vision. Simultaneously, there needs to be encouragement for risk-taking and the development of non-traditional ideas, actions and activities (Vecchio and Applebaum, 1995). Effective leadership, therefore, equips employees with the knowledge of what and why change is really necessary, and provides them with the desire to want change and develop the skills within them so that they know how, and in which direction to proceed.

It would appear from the research that the action of a single change agent, in this educational change process, is highly unlikely. The concept of a change agency has emerged whereby a "cast of characters" who play a number of potentially distinct roles, bring about the change. The roles include the initiator, or ideas person, who incites enthusiasm and stimulates the desire for change. In the UK scenario the initiators were the vice-chancellors who undertook their large group session meetings, and with guidance from the HEFC were mandated to move to a strategic planning process. Others, however, are required to implement the change and within these parameters there are several different players. The project guardians are those who are convinced of the benefits and are committed to the process. In the UK model these were the heads of department, who acted as role models and recruited others who would then drive, implement and deliver the desired changes. The resistance to change is played by those who need convincing of the benefits, and act as subversives striving to divert, block and interfere with the process. These people may have a strong power base but have to be

encouraged to join the process since they can be invaluable in bringing other people along while maintaining a "checks and balance" approach to the implementation. Others may be mere passengers in the process just being carried along with the change, altering their attitudes, beliefs and norms, while some will be spectators observing and eventually making a decision to embrace the ideas or otherwise. As evidenced, from the UK, there may be victims in the system and it is best to avoid making them "anti-heroes" otherwise the plan may be subverted. Finally, others will be helping and guiding employees through various traumas that may affect them during the process. The change agents may adopt all of these roles at any time, and will be required to switch from one to another in order to achieve successful change (Buchanan and Badham, 1999).

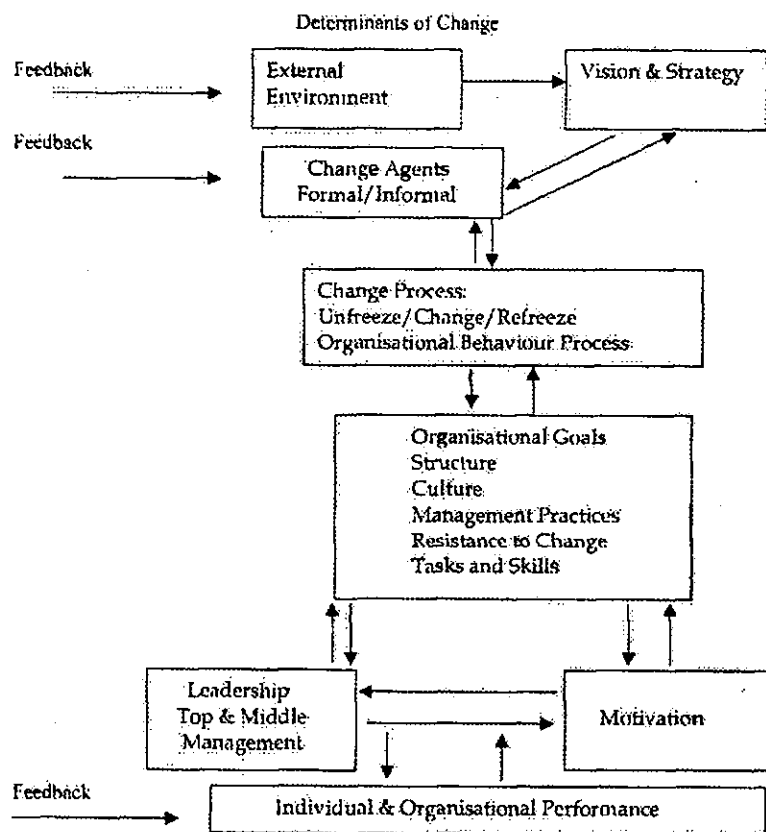
A model for change

In developing a model for use within the college we selected Burke and Litwin's (1992) "Causal model for organisational change", for it offers clarity and rationality, which will have resonance with the management personalities within the college (see Figure 1). As cited by Applebaum *et al.* (1998), the model attempts to consider how organizations change and at the same time examines elements of Robbins' (1993) model with what needs to be altered.

The model attempts to reflect all the complex issues that face the organization, especially when considering how external environmental pressures can influence the vision of senior management who are mainly responsible for initiating the change process. This, in turn, affects the fundamental objectives of the organisation, involving its culture, management style and skills and its resistance to change. The model presents an overview of the change process, which will need to be adopted by the college if the changes envisaged are to be successful.

The model examines the role that the change agents play in the interaction with the external environment. It provides an analysis of the skills required to bring about change, and in many ways supports Kotter's (1985) analysis of the skills needed to create it: agenda setting, networking and forming alliances, bargaining and negotiation. The vision and the strategy are similar to agenda setting and are normally devised by the leadership and involve listening to people throughout the organisation, since agendas are responsible to stakeholders' concerns (Bolman and Deal, 1991).

Figure 1
 Organizational change model



Source: Adapted from Burke and Litwin (1992)

Notes

- 1 The character of the university is international rather than Greek, for as Persianis (1981) observes a university after the Greek model would be almost redundant for Greek Cypriots who could easily attend universities in Greece.
- 2 Three universities were thereafter established after 1974 in the occupied territories in north Cyprus (Athanasziades, 1998), which meant that the Republic of Cyprus was required to confirm its legitimacy. In the academic year 1998-1999 the number of universities in the north increased to six and the number of students to 19,185 (Athanasziades, 1998).
- 3 We are indebted to our colleague Dr George Christodoulides for the statistical data based on that provided by the Ministry of Education and its agents.
- 4 In the final analysis educational establishments are about educating students and not merely the employment of faculty and support staff.

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Dwelling at work: a place where vocation and identity could grow?

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This paper explores how vocational, occupational, practical or indeed experiential education can assist in the development of *phronesis* or practical wisdom within the responsible learner. It proposes that formalized, institutionalized education might inhibit the development of *phronesis* in the quest for knowledge. We propose that should we desire a society which flourishes as a community based on relatedness not transaction and on transcendence not immanence, then we will need to restore the centrality of the workplace as a site for democratic learning rather than instrumentality. We explore this proposal through the lens of Heidegger's development of the notion of *techne* from the being of a craftsman to technical skills.

Introduction

This paper explores how vocational education can assist in the development of *phronesis*, practical wisdom, within the responsible learner. It proposes that the technology of education that enables efficiency might inhibit the development of situated *phronesis*. Furthermore, should we desire a flourishing society that is a democratic community and based on relatedness not transaction, on transcendence not immanence, which embraces both tacit and propositional knowledge, then workplace learning is critical, although not sufficient, for a democratic society. We argue for the restoration of the centrality of workplace learning through active, experiential learning. Indeed, it is through experiential vocational learning (central in the advocacy of Freire, 1998) that democracy and civic responsibility can come to flourish.¹

We suggest that a distinction be drawn between vocational and occupational learning and will argue that the root for this distinction can be found in Heidegger's treatment of *techne*. Furthermore, the centrality of workplace learning in vocational education has shifted to formalized occupational educational institutions through the industrial and knowledge revolutions and has led to a separation and the loss of a vocation's meaningful rites of passage to a foreshortening of experience totalized by

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qualifications. This allows more reliable accounting (and thus control) of learning through the accreditation of discreet, small, achievable and often worthless packages. The resulting theoretically based, observational and shallow learning designed to satisfy institutional funding and timetables is undemocratic and disrespectful of the individual. Indeed, it is a commodification of the individual reminiscent of totalitarian ideologies. Although it may offer students visits to the reality of their potential community of labour, these visits do little to change a student's reference point as being a member of a privileged community of 'schooling adults' (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.100) for it does not engage them in the transformative process of becoming a practitioner and participant in the economic reality of being-in-the-world.²

The proposal, then, is that regardless of the discipline, mode, form or level of study, connectedness within a community of practice, legitimized by society, is critical for the development of an educated and competent practitioner. Such a practitioner will have the dispositions and virtues to transform himself/herself (with the assistance of formal integrated education) to become a *phronesis*, a practitioner of practical wisdom. Furthermore, we assert that as a goal for lifelong education *phronesis* is a positive public good, whereas the disconnected years of hedonistic education, designed to shelter students from the demands of their future communities, alienate them from their present and future civic duties. This has a negative impact on their acceptance of their responsibility towards a democratic society for they develop an identity of an autonomous recipient of other people's knowledge, not a critical user and transformer of that knowledge. This is not to argue against a sound preparatory general education to enable students to make decisions about their life course or to argue for early specialization. Rather, it is recognizing the difference between public and private good and allocating responsibility between two communities of practice, educational and work, in a way that lets students learn and transform. In this context we will argue that *phronesis* should be the primary goal for all education (Gibbs & Angelides, 2004).

In trying to define *phronesis* we turn to Gadamer (1975, p. 316), who considered it a form of moral knowledge that offers an intentionality to act. It is ontological knowledge which complements our skills but is not at our disposal in the same way. The problem for institutional education to develop this wisdom is that *phronesis* is practical understanding *in situ* (situated understanding). It cannot therefore be realized in advance or outside of the experiences that require it. Put differently, the kinds of experiences in which *phronesis* comes into play are understood only insofar as we actually live through them. For Bernstein (1996), as for Gadamer, technical competence (whether it is in skills or ideas) falls short of the wisdom we mentioned, for it is with wisdom that actions can gain their moral direction and practical wisdom supports occupational education. As Gadamer pointed out, *phronimos*, one who has practical wisdom, is:

always in the situation of having to act in exigent circumstances. The image people have of what they ought to be, their conceptions of right and wrong, of decency, courage,

dignity are always presupposed in decisions they are called upon to make. (Gadamer, 1975, p. 283)

Garrison has developed this in the teaching of students, claiming that teaching students to distinguish what they immediately and unreflectively desire from what they ought to desire after reflection is the ultimate goal of education. '... It is an education that lies beyond knowledge alone' (Garrison, 1997, p. 126).

We are our *phronesis*, as Halverson (2004) claimed, in that we cannot separate ourselves from our knowledge and how we use it, and such a definition requires no mention of the form or level of knowledge held. In an educational policy sense this relegates the divide between occupational and academic education to that of genuine pathways to *phronesis*, which is achieved through the blending of knowledge action and understanding and is irreducible to either form of knowledge for, as Lum (2003) pointed out, the distinction is only one of evidence of knowledge not the manifestation of knowledge itself. To borrow from Barnett's (1988) analogy, occupational and academic characterizations of learning act as fixed points in the flux of an educational system which creates eddies in the flow of education rather than compass points by which to steer towards the aim of education, *phronesis*.

Yet, occupational education is growingly subjected to what Colley *et al.* (2003, p. 471) observed in official accounts of learning in occupational education and training which 'emphasise the acquisition of technical skills ... however, such accounts fail to acknowledge the relationship between learning and identity'. To try and understand why occupational education has become synonymous with a rather narrow definition of technical skills, we begin our argument with Heidegger's understanding of *techne* and claim, like him, and in line with Dewey's assertion, that vocational education without a wider context can lead to an 'emphasis on skill or technical method at the expense of meaning' (Dewey, 1966, p. 305). For sure, the rhetoric of the present UK government tries to blur this by talks of providing 'opportunities they need to make the most of themselves or to pursue their talents' (Department for Education and Skills [DfES], 2005a, p. 66) or to help them gain the 'skills we want them to acquire, but above all the values we want them to have' (DfES, 2004, p. 3), but a full reading of the document from which the quotes are taken reveals that qualifications in the narrow sense of occupation is the drive. For sure, the autocratic voice of the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in the second quote can be seen as quite chilling in the desire to shape individuals in the form 'we' desire and thus defines 'making the most of themselves' in terms of permissible citizens rather than autonomous democrats.³

Technical skill or the embracing of a craft: turning to Heidegger

In *The question concerning technology* Heidegger made it clear that technology, the way, is a mode of doing things and a mode of being in the world. In his characterization of technology Heidegger contrasts the ancient Greek and modern views of technology so as to emphasize the difference between the pre-modern and modern relations to being. For him technology is a way of human existence and in

this regard an essential way of being. Beginning with the Greek meaning of *techne*, and through it, Heidegger (1977) claimed three phases in the evolution of technological being in Western history (see also Standish, 1997; Lambeir, 2002).

The first phase is linked with the Greek cosmos, whereby *techne* not only means the 'activities and skills of the craftsman' (Heidegger, 1977, p. 13). Moreover, Heidegger claimed that from olden times until Plato the words *techne* and *episteme* were linked and denoted knowledge, a knowing of something exceptionally well, being an expert in it. Heidegger illustrated this when he discussed the relationship of a cabinetmaker to his creative medium, wood. He argues that a cabinetmaker worthy of the name transcends the use of wood as a mere component in the production process and relates to it as part of his identity as cabinet maker and argues 'the craft will never be anything but empty busywork' (Heidegger, 1968, p. 15). It is in this ancient sense that we should consider *techne* as the goal of occupational education, for this can readily lead to *phronesis*, provided it is accompanied by the continued development of being. This form of *techne* is never finished, it is always in flux, always engaging new problems, always learning; it is the modern craftsman identifying with his/her production, which is quite distinct from a modern academically grounded worker disinterested in his/her work. Importantly, it also needs teachers, mentors and masters to transcend their own goals to free the student to 'let learn' (Heidegger, 1968, p. 15) and it is, in our sense, experiential vocational learning. In encouraging experiential learning we encourage social engagement that offers practical examples of working with others in defining democratic contexts.

Against the background of the Greek pre-technological wholeness, where *techne* is the focus and origin of the world's meaning, stands the second phase of *techne*, where the forces of consumerism, industrialized machine production and mercantilism led to the exploitation of resources and people (Heidegger, 1977). For instance, through mechanized modes of production and the division of labour, as Marxist theory has adequately determined, the worker at the service of capital is isolated from the final product and its general design and thus is alienated from him/her and from social, political and economical realities, as well as from nature as a whole. As Standish (1997, p. 444) puts it, this phase is characterized 'by factory production geared toward the satisfaction of needs and the reduction of the human beings to the labouring animal'. The indentured apprentice of the 1950s, where skills and ways of being were laid down not just to establish competencies but also to shape the identities of the skilled person, illustrates this. A mass market, time controlled response to the apprenticeships of the ancient guilds in the face of the influence of technology, these apprenticeships offered ontological security but at the cost of identity stagnation (see Wolek, 1999).

In the third phase there is an intensification of production that is now increasingly controlled by cybernetics, algorithmic processes, calculative thinking and logistics within overall system theories. In this phase of *techne* desire is exploited to its outer limits for finite social and human ends, because production is now geared towards the achievement of maximal availability, feeding upon the creation of new desires, through an ongoing creation of needs for the satisfaction of endless desire

(Heidegger, 1977; Standish, 1997; Lambeir, 2002). This form of apprenticeship sees the emphasis shift away from modelling and observation of skilled workers to the reification of skills in the workshops and classrooms of colleges and universities. The journey away from the holist engagement with raw material, the creative endeavour, the responsibility to society is demoted to the needs of competencies relevant to one mode of practice and transferable to others in the search for efficiency, profit and materialism. Such learning becomes, we suggest, narrowly occupational.⁴

Thus the mechanism of technology can be conceived as the dominant force for our socialization and essentially gives us our anonymous public identities as technicians. 'The individual in society who feels dependent and helpless in the face of its technically mediated life forms becomes incapable of establishing an identity. This has a profound social effect' (Gadamer, 1996, p. 73). In these circumstances human well-being is realistically restricted to an expression of humanity through personal identification with the production of worthy social institutions and artefacts. This may be a legitimate constraint on our authenticity but, if accepted unquestioningly, the anonymity that this brings can go too far, leading to alienation, bad faith and political exploitation.

Furthermore, this leads to the dispossession of the dispositions of the worthiness of the labour and its artefacts, critical to the development of citizens engaging with their labour within the societal context. The loss of this connectedness of being and creation leads to a loss of identity with the community for which the artefact has a purpose. This loss of relatedness to others away from the consequence of creation is disconnectedness with production. The disconnection strips the act of creation of its moral responsibility to others. As White (1996) proposed, the dispositions (although not exclusive) of hope, social confidence, courage, self-esteem, self-respect, friendship, trust, honesty and decency are significant attributes required of a democrat.⁵ To these we would add criticality and fairness and cocoon them in a concept of care. We use care in the manner of Noddings (1984), in that the basis of caring is, for Noddings, the engrossment with others, the process of setting aside one's own self-concern in order to be free to empathize with the other. It is in this sense that the workplace's reality is its ethos of caring for the development of the competencies of work and democracy, or deny them, in ways more real than the reified environment of the classroom.

To summarize we propose that occupational education has become dislodged from the vocation that enabled our identity to have a grounding in work. This is due to the reification of skill and not the wisdom of its use. To restore the value of vocation to occupations we suggest that vocational education ought to take place in the workplace, but a workplace that is designed to offer a community at peace with itself. Such a combination we believe will enable students to transform to practitioners within the context of being engaged in the actual issues of society and learning the conditions that will support or disrupt the dwelling place they find. We recognize that this is only plausible to the degree that the workplace matches the notion of democracy advocated here. However, we pragmatically assure that the

failure of society to embrace the notions of democracy, dignity and care reflect a society which itself is shallow in these dispositions. We thus argue for the development of such workplaces, given the significant role they play in the identity formation of those engaged in actions within them.

The tension between workplace identity and dispositions of democracy

In *Building dwelling thinking* Heidegger (1975, p. 149) claimed that 'to dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free sphere that cares-for each thing in its own nature. The fundamental character of dwelling is this caring-for'. 'To dwell' is to be at peace within one's abode and to care for all things within it; it is being at home within one's dwelling place, abiding as the ground of all that we care for, all that is important to us, manifesting in and as the *ethos* of the total human being fulfilled in being itself (Heidegger, 2000). Furthermore, Heidegger (1975, p. 149) claimed 'the fundamental character of dwelling is this caring-for'. This dwelling we would suggest involves the acculturation of rituals and practices that are central to learning in practice, but is reflective, questioning where identity is not confined to re-enactments of the past as the present in representation, but the reconstitution of self throughout a lifetime.

For instance, it follows, we believe, that a discourse of skills in the original sense of *techne* is much less problematic in terms of the development of the person than the current use of the term in the sense of prescribed learning outcomes and competency based communities (Smith, 2005). Indeed, the prescription of outcomes of teaching in terms of student learning seems to be counter-intuitive if the aim of education is personal autonomy and practical wisdom. Surely, education is the blending in the educated person of learned being and creative becoming. It can be discussed in terms of skills acquisition, provided these skills are rich in relationship to the development of the identity of the person as a social actor in ways that foster the disposition outlined by White (1996) and Gibbs (2004).

These dispositions are not exclusive of any form of structured education; they draw no real or virtual line in cyberspace or elsewhere in separating vocational and academic. The insight of Dewey (1966) that vocational education is about becoming a contributor to society and warns of the perils for society of an overtly instrumental vocational educational system can become an 'instrument in accomplishing the feudal dogma of social predestination' (p. 318). The tension is between finding a home, a habitus, in society through an occupation in which one can be contented (see Bonnett, 2003, ch. 11), and one forced upon the student as a predetermined function of their social standing. In other words the acquisition of skills should be considered both a political and moral endeavour, as well as a process of achieving competence. It is encouraged through opportunities to learn which are existentially enriched and in which students make decisions not just on the tools for their endeavour but how they want to use them to influence their societal role.

There is evidence in the UK system that vocational education does indeed try to do that. For instance, a recent study by Colley *et al.* (2003) concerning vocational

education in further education colleges illustrated the social constructivism of vocational education through the lens of 'vocational habitus'. Although the focus of their article was not the notion of morality, the case studies they offered clearly indicated that the learning opportunities within the communities of practice that the student engaged in when working other than at college did contribute to their becoming members of their communities in ways beyond skills. The concept of *habitus*, borrowed from Bourdieu (1998), works equally well in an academic setting, as he illustrated in his discussion of the nobility that higher education creates.

Bourdieu and Dewey have both referred to the need to confront the potentially impermeable habitus of occupation and the need to encourage students to confront and resist their identity being passively absorbed by osmosis in the membership of particular communities of practice by birth rather than choice. Quite clearly, it is a political activity which requires mass participation if it is to succeed and to do so it needs free-thinking democrats. In this sense vocational education, as distinct from occupational training, is radical and is engaged in constant renegotiation of its purpose and the value to society of its actions in shaping societal as well as financial well-being in the workplace.

The workplace, with its structure, culture, atmosphere or climate and prescribed way of conducting business, is a dwelling place in the Heideggerian sense. Indeed, it is evident from the literature that 'workplace culture is multifaceted and asserts a major influence on individuals' and groups' behaviour' (Wilson *et al.*, 2005, p. 928). It is a world where any artificial divide between ethics and the being of an ethical agent is removed and where learning takes place in both explicit and tacit skills and in the transcendence and immanence of being. In this sense the workplace can be where one can authentically reveal oneself through one's work in ways that encourage caring and participation through responsibility and the realization of potential. Such a workplace we suggest is conducive to an *ethos* that defines what the community of practice means within the world at large. It is developed through the engagement of workers with workers who are often subjected to, rather than liberated from, the management that directs their endeavour. We are talking of the *ethos* of actual practice of novice and connoisseur, those that work, engage and reveal themselves to workmates who care about each other. This is most obviously seen in dangerous occupations, but is also in the potentially less physically dangerous but psychologically threatening service and caring industries.

The point of issue for us is not the way in which the students within communities of practice learn their work-related skills, whether this is in the form of peripheral participation as theorized by Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) or by those who have voiced concerns about the applicability of such conceptualizations in the workplace (see, for example, Boud & Middleton, 2003; Fuller *et al.*, 2004) or theorists of tacit learning (see, for example, Polanyi, 1974; Eraut, 2004), rather it concerns how the transformative nature of engagement in the workplace creates a democratic identity. Moreover, where are these dispositions best developed, the classroom or the workplace? For example, how an 'apprentice' gains practitioner status effects the construction of the ongoing identity of the learning in the sense of

the democratic disposition mentioned earlier. From a Heideggerian perspective a community of practice is a dwelling, an abode for the development of an identity. It can be a compelling setting in which to develop an identity grounded in the tacit dispositions of democracy provided the community allows 'co-constitution' (Billet & Somerville, 2004) and that its practices are open to reconstruction. Dwelling here adds value to learning, particularly when compared with the disjointed preparation of students in theorized environments such as the classroom, laboratory or college workshop, where the actuality of the experience of doing and the responsibility thus rendered is less conducive to the development of the whole person. It might also simply be boring or incomprehensible when stripped of its situatedness.

Of course, educational institutions themselves can be considered as workplaces for the purposes of the discussion, but in this context it is their value in the development of the student, which is in the engagement of that student in the creation of meaning for himself/herself as an existential social entity with responsibilities, accountabilities and duties. This is difficult if they follow the curriculum of the teacher if this is not informed by the needs of the student, but is a curriculum designed to appease government policy to be seen to be educated by various instrumental measurements. If this is the mission of educational institutions then it can combat its own manipulation by powerful others to structure the acculturation of students into the dependency culture of consumerism and unthinking acceptance of allocated roles: if it fails to do this then it becomes a sorry excuse for a real workplace in contributing to a vocational disposition.

Other workplaces can achieve a flourishing of democratic dispositions provided they foster a caring relevance in order that co-building of their reality with that of the student can come about. In doing this, co-construction reveals the essence of democracy and allows the disposition of caring for self and others proposed by White (1996) to flourish. Cold instrumental learning environments, whether workplace or classroom, fail to create this connectedness with one's identity and being with others by failing to encourage the continuing revealing of a reconstructive self. However, the notion of care, with its conflated disposition, is easily side-tracked into the rituals of the workplace, as indicated by Bourdieu (1998); unless the student has the criticality to question and a disposition towards action the workplace can thwart development. It is here that formal education can contribute to the process of the educated and wise person who is grounded in the reality in the world's workplaces. As Taylor (2005) argued, rather than diverting liberal education too early in a student's career to vocational skills, perhaps it should 'look towards innovative and effective ways of assisting youth develop these (skills) in a manner that will be socially, rather than narrowly vocationally, capacity building' (p. 215). However, this will require change, as currently the educational community places demands on the individual to achieve in terms of accredited qualifications whilst the workplace is concerned with other forms of production. Le Maistre and Paré (2004) talked about the difference between the two systems, work and educational institutions, as being 'radically different activity systems, with quite distinct objectives, mediation means, rules, divisions of labour' (p. 45). Both risk alienating and exploiting students unless

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they can create an abode where the student can dwell in the security of a community to grow personally and critically for himself/herself rather than co-produce with others for others. Lave and Wenger (1991) identified two, often incompatible, perspectives, the 'learning curriculum' and the 'teaching curriculum' (pp. 97–98), to explain this phenomenon and the alienation of some students from the teaching curriculum.

Our paper is hopeful that a return to the workplace as a social driver of a purposeful and worthy society can be negotiated in the post-modern notion of work. We do not claim this is happening but argue that Government initiatives (see, for instance, the learning through work web site) that centralize the triple helix of workplace, education and training have been developed without the social impact being considered, for it would be folly to give so much power to the owners of production without considering the impact on social capital. So, should the workplace become democratic rather than dogmatic, enlightened rather than self-interested, socially conscious rather than instrumental, then it would be an ideal place for the development of skills of being and becoming oneself within a community sanctioned by society that is, in and of itself, worthwhile (Winch, 2002).⁶ Paradoxically, it would provide a meaningful alternative to the current totalizing influence of an academic environment unframed by the goals of achievement and productivity for the 'we' in the Secretary of State's forward to the 14–19 White Paper. Yet we recognize that such theorizing is predicated on many assumptions, not least of which is the empirical; the establishment of a link between workplace learning and the flourishing of democratic dispositions. This is a difficult task as it requires the unravelling of many learning communities that students have experienced prior to active engagement in the workplace and the identification of how this integrated environment can be seen as contributing to the flourishing of democratic values, and this is a different task from understanding how a work ethic can be engendered in youth, which seems to be a consistent theme in the economic discourse of the skills agenda. It is, however, worthy of research, for if the case is proven a greater emphasis needs to be placed on workplace learning and its active contribution to democratic criticality within a democracy respectful and caring of others. If workplace learning fails to make such a contribution then it needs to be stopped and we need to address the big question about what we are letting happen to our humanity.

Notes

1. Arnal and Burwod (2003) pointed to the potentially undemocratic notion of tacit knowledge due to its exclusiveness to communities of practice. Whilst recognizing this, we are in agreement with them that explicitness of standards and rules that are not negotiable themselves fail to guarantee inclusiveness and democracy, and having acknowledged this point we take it no further in this paper.
2. We agree with Gamble (2001, pp. 198–199) that theories of 'transmission have a far stronger impact than has been acknowledged in debates around skill formation and lifelong learning in recent years. We ignore them at our peril'.

3. It is interesting for instance to note that in the White Paper the word value is more often than not linked with the word added rather than in the sense of personal worthiness and that the words democratic (and its derivatives), ethics and morality do not appear at all in this nor do they appear in the part three of *Skills: getting on in business, getting on at work* (DfES, 2005b).
4. The importance of this point and its absence from discussion in the government skills plans to increase apprenticeship (DfSE, 2005b, p. 8) is, we feel, telling in the sense of commercial accreditation being the favoured mode of revelation.
5. She is clear to point out that her notion of democracy is not a singularity.
6. We recognize, as reported in the 14–19 White Paper, that concerns have been raised about the teaching of such skills in schools and colleges and by work-based providers at all ages by OfSTED and the QCA.

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Leading Change in Higher Education

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Abstract

RESEARCH PAPER

Purpose

The study investigates the attributes of successful change management in five, diverse, UK universities and draws conclusions as to how their experience can be used to help others manage similar processes. In so doing it identifies what is termed the Contextual Leader Deficient (CLD) and offers ideas to restore that deficiency.

Methodology

The research is based on in-depth interviews and analysis undertaken using NUD*IST.

Findings

Although the research recognises that business and education have different habitus it suggests that change management process success in business can be utilised in the field of education and offers evidence from the UK experience.

Practical implications

The paper offers a form of analysis, which can help educational institutions to decide upon and then implement action learning sets as the means to encourage successful change management.

Key words

Change, leadership, action learning.

Leading Change in Higher Education

Interventions aimed at securing organisational change depend heavily on effective leadership (Buchanan and Badham, 1999; Carnall, 2003). The results of the research undertaken by McRoy and Gibbs (2003) in the higher education sector suggest that leadership plays a central and important function in the change management process. Just as change is complex, so is the act of leadership which requires those who aspire to lead to be able to communicate the desired vision, model the roles that will lead to effective implementation, and possess the managerial skills to deal with aspects of change such as barriers and fear, as well as being endowed with the ability to recognise and engage with informal power agents who may resist the change process.

Leadership is generally distinguished as being different from management in that the former is concerned with envisioning change. Middlehurst (1995) maintains that in order to achieve a shared vision, leadership needs to be in place at different levels within the organisation, and Gregory (1996), argues that owing to the complexity of change and the necessary activities that are required, then leadership should be shared (see Dewey, 1975; Giroux, 1994; Purpel, 1998 for their views on this). Further, Gregory contends that:

“where justice, equality and participation are, key philosophical beliefs, ... the leadership itself needs to be participatory and democratic” (1996, p. 49).

An optimistic view is taken by Middlehurst (1989); Slowey (1995) and Gregory (1996), who see the potential in universities for managing change through ‘dispersed leadership’ based on collegiality, participation and collaboration. The management of change is intertwined with organisational culture, which according to Johnson (1992),

is represented by the core values, beliefs and attitudes held by employees. Accordingly, organisational change is more likely to be successfully implemented if it is in-line with the cultural norms. Weil (1999) concurs with this general position but disputes the idea that in higher education there is cultural unity, and she goes on to suggest that there needs to be incentives to support systemic learning rather than concentrating on the bureaucracy involved in quality initiatives. Systemic reform is supported by Fullan (1993) who believes there has to be a necessary relationship between culture and structure. Similarly, Seller, states:

“Restructuring and reculturing mean that the organisational manner of conducting business, as well as the values that underpin the operation, must both change” (2001, p. 256).

Blackwell & Preece (2001) consider that for internal change agents, the challenge has been the growing interest in government, triggered by the interest of the treasury to protect tax-payers’ money, raise productivity and create a mass system whilst at the same time maintaining the three E’s. As a result, academic staff feel that their professional autonomy and academic freedom are under threat. Senior managers are in the position of striving to protect their institutions whilst at the same time professing ownership of change which, in fact, hails from one of these external sources (Clarke and Newman, 1997). This may result in rivalries between disciplines and personal jockeying for position, especially for those within institutions, who aspire to positions of leadership, which in turn adds further pressure to the nature of change. The professional autonomy of staff and the fact that collegiality is entrenched may make it difficult to engender change, even if desirable, especially for change agents (Blackwell and Preece, 2001).

The management literature reveals that change is complex in nature and requires managers to employ a range of skills and abilities to enact the change process. The literature confirms that identifying the need to change is an essential requirement and once this has occurred then employing effective leadership strategies is vital. Where organisations require transformational change it is a case of deciding what not to change in order to engage with those factors that are in most need of it. In the incremental change process concern is levelled at environmental scanning and being clear about the sectoral developments and best practice. In both situations leadership qualities are essential and the literature reveals this to be the central pillar in successful implementation.

As revealed in the background to change Kotter's (1995) work identifies important steps in effecting change, and although derived from a business perspective, it may have validity for change in higher education.

Effectively identifying the need to change goes to the very heart of leadership. In an organisation that only needs to respond slowly to an incrementally changing environment, then observation of the necessary conditions for change in the sector is the main requirement. In turbulent environments, it is more about deciding what not to change and later being capable of managing the multiple changes likely to be required in order to maintain congruence with the sector's requirements.

Jeffreys (1995) and Bridges (2003), consider the notion of transition management, which examines the role of leaders in bringing about effective change through a transitional process. According to them, the transitional period is generally the phase

during which people resist and it is not necessarily the change itself. They consider that change effectively involves shifts in the external environment that produce a significant impact on the organisation. In the transitional phase they appraise the psychological effects on people as they come to terms with the change, as a process of inner experience. In essence people resist giving up their identity as it is expressed in their current work, and resist the chaos and uncertainty that involves many change initiatives.

Bridges (2003) rather Hegelian approach identifies three phases of the transition process, 1) endings, 2) neutral zone, and 3) new beginnings. The role of the change agents is to nurture others throughout the transitional process toward new beginnings whilst maintaining the level of activity. This model and its implications reflect much of the work undertaken by Lewin (1951), in the development of his unfreeze/refreeze model. As such, like any organic process, change cannot be made to happen just by a word or act alone, it needs to be encouraged, supported and reinforced if it is to be successfully implemented.

Research Design

In light of the literature, and in order to examine the leadership of change, five universities in the UK were selected that, a) share a similar background of missions to disseminate knowledge through teaching, b) are more vocationally orientated in choice of provision, and c) have similar resource endowments at the time of change. All are located in cities within the UK and face different local challenges, different competitive challenges and differing challenges in relation to major investments.

The data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with senior members of staff from the institutions over a period of six months. In total eight senior administrative academics were interviewed. All the interviews for each institution were completed and transcribed, and the analysis of the interview material was conducted in three stages: In the first instance the material was read meticulously in order to become familiar with the content, and some marginal notes were made at this point. Secondly, the time line for the decision was established following the first reading and then checked against the documentary evidence; thirdly, each interview transcript was re-read and coded using NUD*IST, and finally marginal notes in addition to the coding were added as the coding progressed. This programme enabled the identification of text segments and resulted in fifty-eight data codes. A few of these original codes survived the ongoing revisions and the collapsing of categories prior to final analysis. The researchers printed out categories in groups and coded them again by hand, testing new coding categories by merging several and revaluating the data.

Findings

There were major issues relating to the type and size of the institutions; for instance the major research organisations generally had a different agenda to post-1992 and new universities. The pre-1992 institutions perceived their role differently in the sense that it was expected that they might recruit the more able students. This in turn transmuted the ability to attract a more 'able' staff with the necessary research skills. Whereas the size of the institution, both in number and budget terms meant that managing the change process would appear more difficult and additional effort would be required to convince staff that change was actually needed, those institutions who had to compete

for market share may already have the change processes in place which could enable them to be more flexible and attuned to the external environment.

The implication was that some measure of significance was placed on the issue in the minds of the senior managers being interviewed. The often repeated issues raised were subsequently aggregated into strong themes or sub-themes which revealed a link to the main theme but were less frequently discussed, or were mentioned using different terminology.

The main themes offered are explained below in order to provide some order to the issues raised, together with the effect and impact that each theme has on the management of change in the organisation:

Status is concerned with how the internal and external stakeholders viewed the institution with respect to its position in the environment with particular emphasis on the title university and how long it had been established.

“... there was a perception, however vague that hanging on to college of HE status would relegate us in the marketplace.”

University D Interview 4

Reputation, although closely linked to status, it may at times be used interchangeably, but in this project it relates to the recognition of academic activity by various external stakeholders.

“What we are trying to do is build a reputation to meet the demands of the customer and provide an exceptionally high quality of service.”

University D Interview 1

Massification is the demand placed on the sector by government to increase the number of students in higher education to 50 per cent.

“... better value for money and seeking to strip the amount of state contribution to HE and, therefore, what you have to have had over the years is students numbers going up but actual cash going down ...”

University A Interview 1

Market Needs and Segmentation: The attempt to anticipate what the demands are likely to be in the future for graduates on completion of their studies and from which segments of these markets.

“I think it is a combination of astute reading of the kind of market potential and where the gaps are but also recognising that we are in a very fortunate position ...”

University D Interview 3

Customers are viewed by the universities to be all of those stakeholders who may wish to use the university, for example, as students, consultants or various organisations for research purposes.

“The organisation is much more customer driven than when I first joined over thirty years ago.”

University A Interview 1

Recruitment and Growth is linked to massification and is concerned with meeting targets and increasing the number of students in the sector.

“... what we are saying now is go for growth but do not under recruit ...”

University A Interview 1

Competition: Individual universities used in the case study completed an analysis of what others were doing in the sector and linked this back to status and market needs.

“A major reason for bringing the two institutions together, even though we worked closely together in the past, was to maintain a competitive edge with those in the region but more essentially nationally and internationally.”

University C Interview 1

Cultural Change is an important aspect of the change process and is concerned with moving the institution's values and belief systems towards creating a desire to change the way people may behave within the organisation.

“Culture is a major issue in change, bringing together belief systems and values is important.”

University C Interview 1

Change Process is the enactment of change through the improvement of organisational performance.

“Initially the change process was quite transformational but now I believe [it] will be emergent in the future.”

University E Interview 1

Management Practices: The necessity for managers to engage fully with faculty and staff in order to gain commitment to the change process.

“The regard that managers need to have for people around them [during change] has to be much higher, because if these people are treated like drones they will react badly and they are articulate, strong and wilful people who will make their views known and quite properly so, so you need to be careful that any change programme you have in place needs to be orchestrated, properly and you need to bring people with you.”

University D Interview 2

Strategic Planning is a logical and developed plan of action that holds credibility to those who must implement it and is the basis for the change programme.

“... I felt that although we had a strategic plan ... it really didn’t have ownership – and ownership is an issue.”

University A Interview 1

Leadership defines those managers who are acting as change agents, are designated to implement the plan, and who are committed to guide others to the new desired position.

“From a senior management viewpoint it is necessary to have transparent and close leadership ... in order to inculcate shared values.”

University D Interview 1

Communication is the ability of the leaders to transfer the message of change.

“... the team knew and supported the direction that we needed to take and were able to answer questions clearly and with clarity in order to reduce any barriers that might exist.”

University E Interview 1

Role Modelling is an example set by the leaders to act as they would want others to act in the changed environment.

“It takes five years [to make change]. You’ve got to get ownership down there. It’s no good having ownership up here. You’ve got to get each admission’s tutor knowing what the targets are and if he doesn’t meet that target, knowing that it has knock-on consequences ... you’ve got to have very ‘savvy’ deans and heads of department.”

University A Interview 1

Academic Perspective: The way in which academics view the institution and perceive their professional freedom.

“... loyalty to the institution is an international phenomenon ... they [academics] are just not involved in the university and this is a very real problem ... then building up of loyalty is very hard.”

University B Interview 1

When the interview data were submitted to computer analysis using NUD*IST, a pattern of nodes emerged which appeared to relate to several principal groupings of: context, substance and stewardship of change. Context – adapted from Pettigrew’s (1985) work – refers to the internal and external environments and, therefore, is the operational environment of the institution as it evolves temporally. The substance of change refers to what changes were made, whether to the organisation’s size or the way its activities were conducted, and also includes the size or scale of change. Stewardship (Donaldson and Davies, 1991; Davies *et al.*, 2001) refers to facilitating the implementation of change, its leadership and an assessment of its progress and effects.

CONTEXT

It was no real surprise to find that, driven by business context pressures the universities researched had changed emphasis over the years and had adopted a more entrepreneurial outlook and business culture. From the late 1980’s when the polytechnics were no longer confined to local authority control and were eventually designated university status – and in the words of the former head of the HEFC Sir Bill Stubbs, now had the “freedom to go bust” – the control and subsequent reporting methodology to the HEFC prompted senior management teams to examine the vision

and purpose of the university and in general make them more reactive to external pressures.

From the research the universities recognised that they needed to respond to demands of government, industry and societal groups, whilst at the same time maintaining and refining their traditional role of teaching, research and student learning as this was becoming more complicated due to the rapid changes occurring within the environment. It meant that in order to survive, despite old traditions or individual characters which had coloured their past, they would need to adopt a more flexible and adaptable position.

It was noted that higher education is in a complex change environment:

“Educational change is complex, more so than business change and requires a greater number of managerial skills than possibly in business due to the diversity of the organisation and the variety and power of stakeholders.”

University C Interview 1

Higher education, it would appear, is influenced just like any other business by the market supply and demand mechanisms.

Problems were revealed in the data that may contribute to staff morale issues and low support for some changes. An example might be under-recruitment. It could lead to budgetary constraints, which would mean less money to spend on recruitment and retention during the following year. From the authors' view this is a classical 'death spiral' concept that is directly related to business practices.

“... better value for money ... so what you have over the years is student numbers going up but actual ‘cash’ going down.”

University A Interview 1

Although senior managers do recognise the necessity to operate in a more business like manner there is the recognition that faculty do have an important role to play in the organisation:

“I make a real distinction of what the university must be like business wise in that it must be well managed and have real value for money. On the other hand I do not try and teach academics how they should run their programmes.”

University A Interview 1

SUBSTANCE

The external influences impacting on a complex institution such as a university do mean that senior managers have to make some key decisions in order to enact change. As such, a university may be considered to be interacting in an open systems organisational model in which the external environmental events, issues and forces cannot be viewed independently but as interrelated elements in the complex entity. This links back to the literature review and the research of Davies and Ellison (1997) who suggest that the external environment does have an important impact on the change process.

Across the institutions researched there were arguments that the external environment did form an essential ingredient in guiding change:

“I am concerned about the constant incessant [government] policy making concerning the sector.”

University E Interview 1

“... our funding is dependent on the effective implementation of a [market force] policy directed by external stakeholders.”

University D Interview 2

STEWARDSHIP

It was relatively clear from the response that senior managers felt there had been a ‘flatter and leaner’ structure created, but on closer examination they were still hierarchical and, in some instances, significant power, especially financial was retained at the centre. What became apparent was that certain decision-making authority had been devolved but was still closely monitored in order to ensure compliance with the strategic objectives:

“... the [organisational] structure is flatter than it used to be but there is still a hierarchy that is needed to ensure operational effectiveness.”

University A Interview 1

“Schools are allowed to spend budgets as they see fit within the limitations of the strategic plan. No need to get permission to spend or sign off contracts or grants.”

University C Interview I

Those recently created, 2005, new universities viewed that structural change provided the means to improve efficiency and effectiveness even though there is little evidence to suggest that their original structures were any less effective than the implemented new ones:

“The structural changes are related to the strategic success of the institute and the flatter responsive nature of the organisational structure and systems is so that the university can adapt quickly to customers’ needs and those of the wider environment.”

University C Interview I

The main results emerge when the artificial separation of themes into the categories above are merged, as in Table I.

<TAKE IN TABLE I>

What can be seen is a common overlap where external pressures of growth and marketisation are set in tension with organisational change. This is not surprising in the emerging capitalist and managerialist regimes that are the favoured response of government to expansions in numbers, the development of a knowledge society and changes in the purpose of higher education. It is the management of this interlocking sector where the success of the change within universities is most critical, and it is here that the literature indicates that leadership is the critical factor for success.

<TAKE IN FIGURE 1>

The themes that emerged centre upon the business environment as context, which is a relatively new phenomenon for those institutions in the UK. The external environment is significant with regard to how the individual stakeholders perceive higher education and how its services may be utilised by them. It is however, the overlaps in Figure 1 between stewardship and context where the main issue for change leadership is most significant. Stewardship of the institution as expressed by Donaldson and Davies (1991), and Davies *et al.*, (2001) is focused on leadership and making sure that all managers fully engage with staff. To support this action research is a methodology, resulting in action learning activities, that is employed in the UK to determine the underlying concepts that require addressing.

This overlap we term the Contextual Leadership Deficiency (CLD). It applies in different forms in all organisations but we believe it is harder to resolve because of the different fields of activity. By employing action research techniques, leaders and

change agents instigate action learning sets as a development tool, and in the UK this has been a considerable learning experience, which requires anything up to five years to implement. Nevertheless it is considered an essential aspect of inculcating change within the organisation. This has been supported through leadership development programmes and the further use of action learning sets in order to improve leadership skills. Through these programmes the concepts of open communications, transparency and 'management by walking about' have emerged. Academic leaders not only require the many skills and the knowledge needed in any leadership role in any profession but also in those areas unique to higher education. These include an understanding of the culture and history of an institution, its organisation, and the impact these factors can have on the change process, the barriers to change in higher educational settings, an understanding of assessment, the research on learning, student development, and teaching, and the process and the criteria that can be used for rewarding faculty, staff, and operational units.

The main finding of this study's success in restoring CLD is achieved in changing ideology as well as function and organisation. Not only do change managers need to necessarily make change happen in the same socio-economic-moral perspective but from their field of social endeavour and the social capital it generates. The forms of capital identified by Bourdieu (1986), are economic, cultural and social, each of which contributes to the field of the study of a specific aspect of social life. Within it are structures that maintain it such as, institutions, authorities and activities through which individuals transact. This field is not fixed in time and space by dynamic engaging with its populations, being changed by them and changing them in ways that reflect the weight of capital each brings to the engagement. The way in which this cultural capital

is employed is greatly influenced by the habitus that has shaped the form of actions that the individual can operate with. In the management of change in higher education it has meant for some the changing of their way of being. The real difficulty emerges when the goals and values of an organisation are internalised by, and taken for granted by the academic and, as Smith (2003) points out, whether habitus can be mediated through formal leadership programmes remains contestable. However, the research here confirms that of Neave (2002) in that institutions have been reformed from autonomous collectives to stakeholder organisations and its main manifestation can be seen in whose judgements are priorities and how they verified in Universities. At risk for many is academic authority in a time of marketisation, and leadership is needed to reconstitute this notion away from an authoritarian authority based on one form of knowledge and onto more collaborative knowledge creation (Gibbons *et al.*, 1994; Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff, 1997).

In accord with Fullan, (2001) the management of these intensive issues is the blending in management of a coherent vision with attending moral issues and social responsibility, and control of the process of change through good communications and cultivated relationships. Our research reveals all these and where they do not exist, identifies the methods used to develop these skills.

By employing action research techniques, leaders and change agents instigate action learning sets as a development tool, which has been a considerable learning experience in cases used here, and which requires anything up to five years to implement. Nevertheless it is considered an essential aspect of inculcating change within the organisation. This has been supported through leadership development programmes

and the further use of action learning sets in order to improve leadership skills. Through this programme the concepts of open communications, transparency and 'management by walking about' have emerged.

We do not assume however that such proscription is easy to implement even when revealed to those involved in change. The self evident good of sustainable good is encoded in the model of higher education policy which is not unusually acclaimed. This resistance to change to the managerial model has its own literature and will only be mentioned here to indicate that the change process is clearly dominated by the power of the most influential parties. In the work we have undertaken this clearly points to those who control the sources of funding and away from those who control the generation of knowledge; the academic. The loss of the academic hegemonic position in the university not only involves organisational changes but significant changes in academic identity. This is tied to ideologies of the academy which were connected to notions of academic freedom, professional autonomy and associated notions of liberalism, tolerance and equality. Such ideologies need time to change and an important aspect of this research is the requirement for time in the transformative process. This temporal dimension of change offers us future insights into the changing ontology of the academic and into other world views.

The findings of this enquiry are to be used in assisting an organisation in transition in a new European state. The notion of action research and action learning within their context of their role as communicative leaders is unfamiliar. The model of Stewardship, Context and Substance will be used to illustrate the issues they face and

through experiential learning programmes will be devised to work with the findings of the above study to offer help in their journey of transition.

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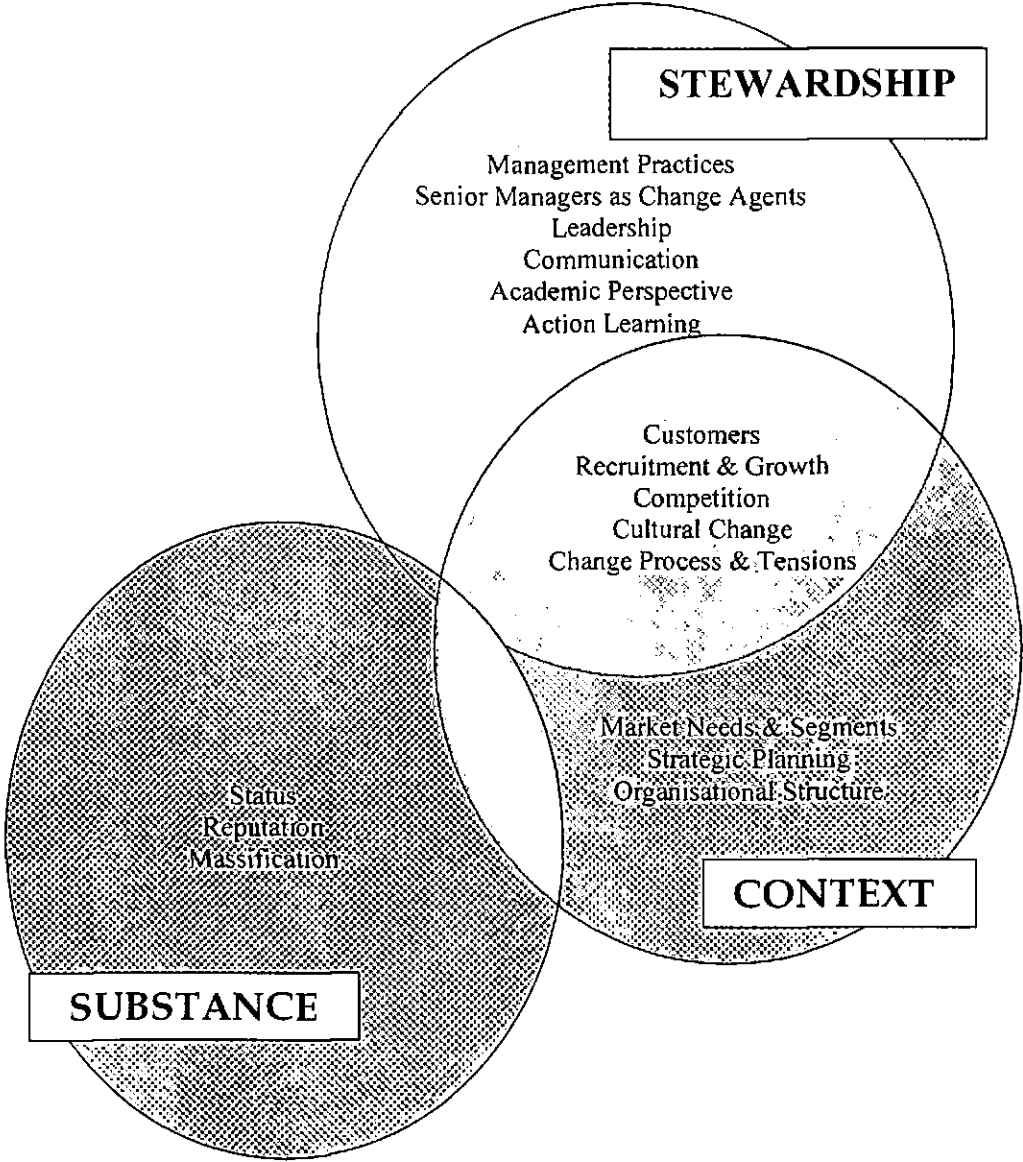
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Table I: Summary

Context	Substance	Stewardship
Market Needs and Segments	Status	Management Practices
Strategic Planning	Reputation	Senior Managers as Change Agents
Organisational Structure	Massification	Leadership
		Communication
		Academic Perspective
		Action Learning

Figure I: Emerging Main Themes and Sub-Themes



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